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DIGITAL EDITION

JOHN FOGERTY ON **SONGWRITING**

GREAT ***CLAPTON*** **GUEST GIGS**

BLACK SABBATH A BLUES BAND?

SOUND ADVICE FROM ***STEVE MILLER***

\+ PRODUCT REVIEWS

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AUGUST/SEPTEMBER

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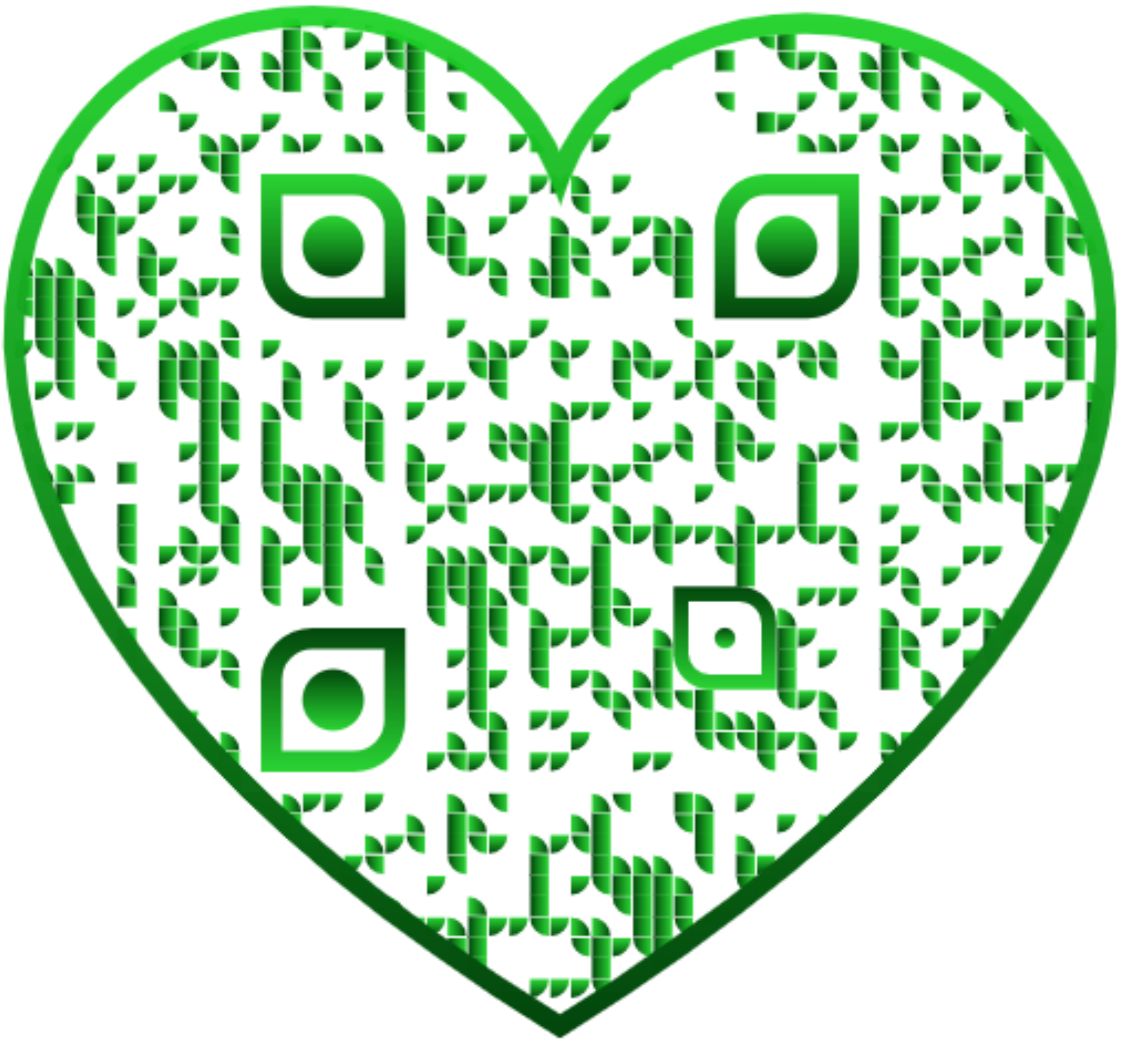
CLASSIC STRING BENDS

SANTANA TALKS SOLOS TONE & ONENESS

THIS SONG CHANGED MY LIFE: BRIAN SETZER/STEVE VAI/NEIL YOUNG



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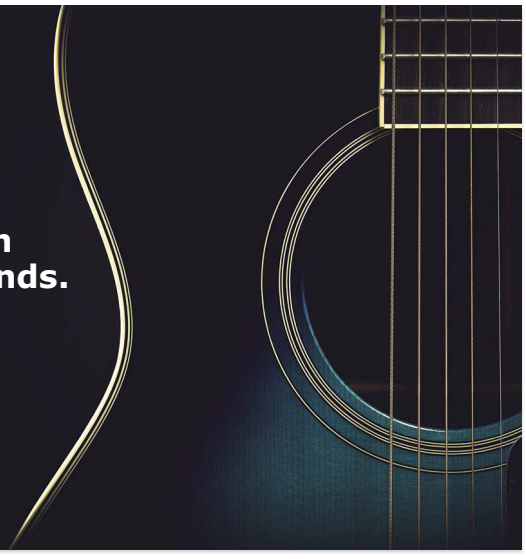

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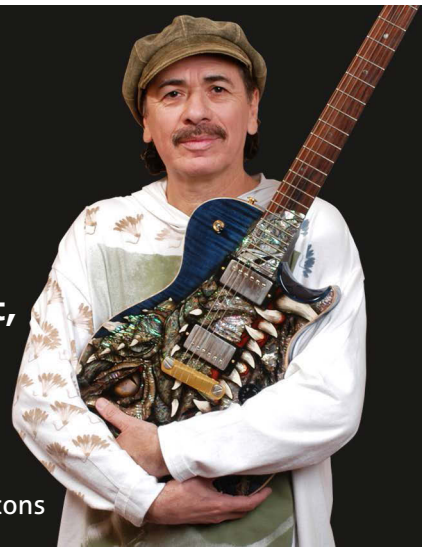

Carlos Santana by Robert Knight

Cover Photo Larry Marano Atlas Icons

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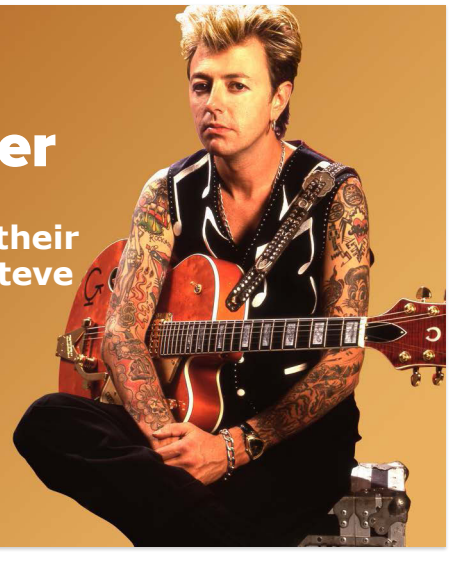

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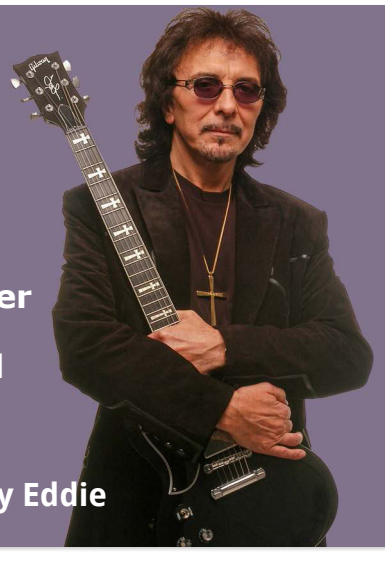

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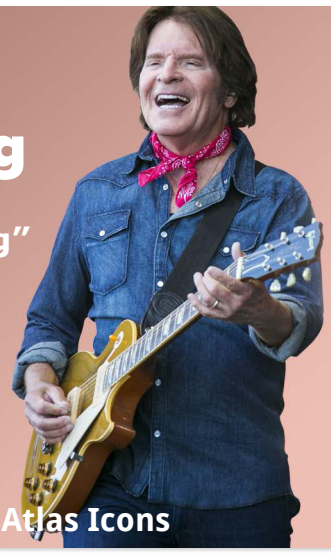

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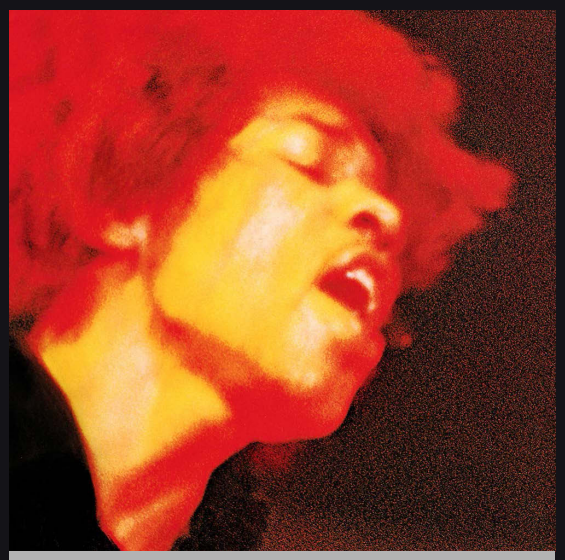
NEAL SCHON

by **John Stix**

For most of us, a trip back to our youth includes seeking out the first house we remember living in. Of course, no matter where you look, everything has changed. Most of us really can't go back to the future. Then there is Neal Schon. Going back to his past has given Neal a remarkable present. After more than four decades he got the old band back together. That old band recorded *Santana III* and *Caravanserai*. He was 15 when he originally joined them. *Santana IV* hit all the classic rhythms and percussive moves that fuel Neal for guitar blasts that roar with abandon. Then of course, there are the melodic excursions of his group Journey, and the instrumental soaring of his solo albums. Speaking objectively, no one has had a better creative 18 months than Neal Schon. If you want to know what digs at the heart of Neal's playing, there's no better place to look than his list of essential albums. ■

Neal Schon by Dave Plastik

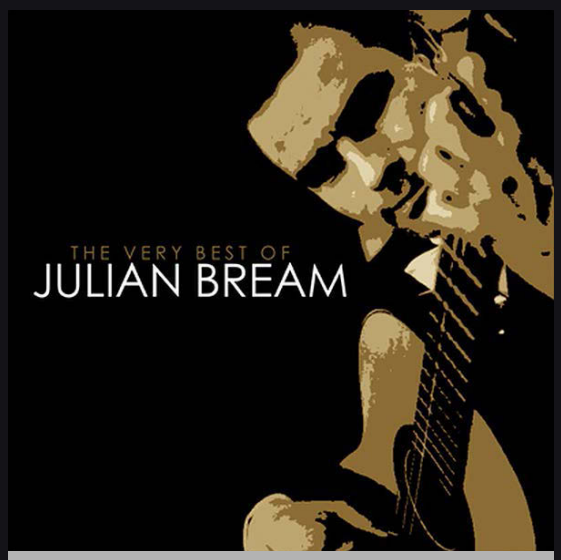
Neal Schon by Eddy Malluk Atlas Icons



01.

Electric Ladyland
The Jimi Hendrix Experience

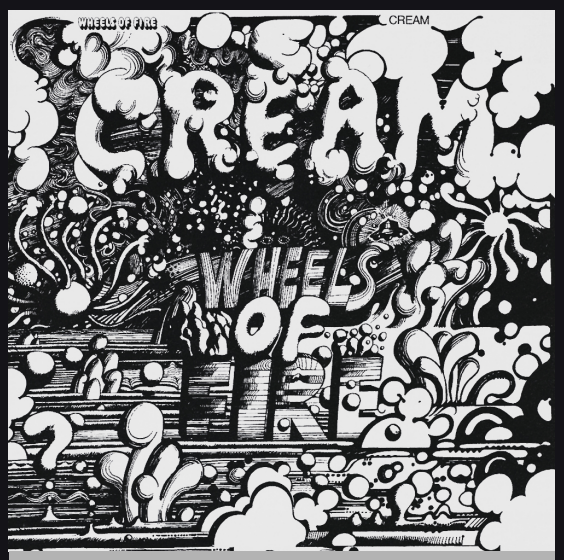
Get it on iTunes



02.

The Very Best of Julian Bream
Julian Bream

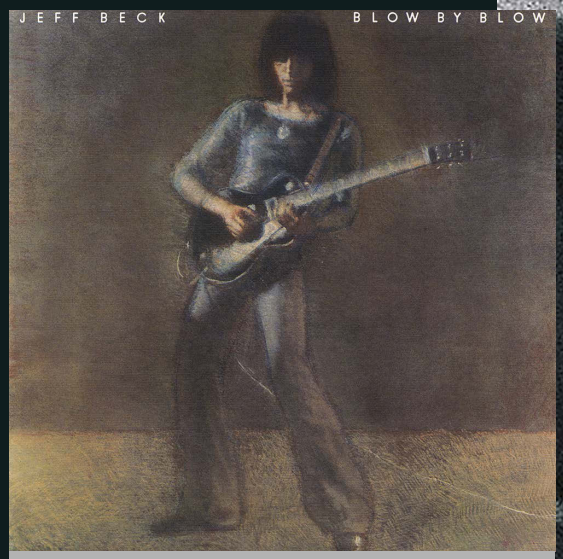
Get it on iTunes



03.

Wheels of Fire
Cream

Get it on iTunes



04.

Blow by Blow
Jeff Beck

Get it on iTunes

05.

Best of Wes Montgomery
Wes Montgomery

Get it on iTunes

Neal Schon by Mark Weiss

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YNGWIE MALMSTEEN

by **John Stix**

Cocky, bold, and completely sure of himself, 18-year-old Yngwie Malmsteen left his native Sweden (in 1982) to become a guitar hero. First recording with Steeler, then playing with Alcatrazz, and soon after as a solo artist, his stylistic melding of Di Meola and Holdsworth, Blackmore and Bach, Malmsteen splashed upon the metal music scene turning all heads in its wake.

His awesome guitar techniques and clearly focused Bach rock ideas influenced a new generation of guitar player/composers. His 21st solo recording, the mostly instrumental *World on Fire*, is another explosive neo-classical guitar extravaganza. Yngwie has often spoken of his influences. Here we ask him for some album titles to go with the names. He was happy to share a few essentials. ■

1

Axis: Bold as Love

The Jimi Hendrix Experience

Get it on iTunes

2

Are You Experienced

The Jimi Hendrix Experience

Get it on iTunes

3

Burn

Deep Purple

Get it on iTunes

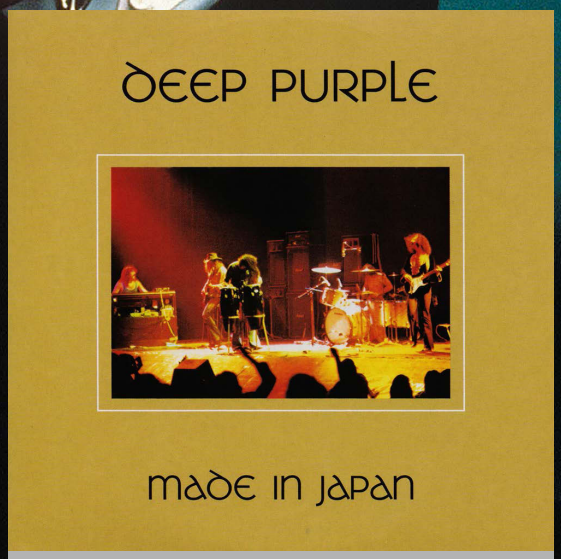
Yngwie Malmsteen by William Hames Atlas Icons

Yngwie Malmsteen by Mark Weiss

4

Fireball
Deep Purple

Get it on iTunes



5

Made in Japan
Deep Purple

Get it on iTunes

6

Trespass
Genesis

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STEVE LUKATHER

"CROSSROADS" BY CREAM, *WHEELS OF FIRE*

This is one of the best solos of all time. There is not one bend or wrong note in this solo. It's total state–of-the-art, Eric Clapton at his best. It has everything – the phrasing, the build of the solo, the burn, the sound, the tone, the vibrato, the intonation, and the element of fun. It doesn't get any better unless it's "Voodoo Chile," which is state of the art in its own way. "Crossroads" is the ultimate and the fact that it's live makes it even more the ultimate. You know it wasn't a punch-in. It's Eric just burning. I was hanging with Eddie Van Halen and this is one of his favorite songs. He plays it note -for-note. When I first heard it, it made me feel a certain way. I thought this is incredible. I didn't realize the impact of it being live and what it was really all about until a few years later when I was getting into studying everybody's solos. Every guitar player knows the "Crossroads" solo, and if they don't they should learn it. ■

Steve Lukather by Rick Gould

“EVERY GUITAR PLAYER KNOWS THE “CROSSROADS” SOLO, AND IF THEY DON’T THEY SHOULD LEARN IT.”

Steve Lukather by Robert Knight

Crossroads (audio from Wheels of Fire, video from elsewhere)

Nuggets: Classic String Bends

By **Dave Rubin**

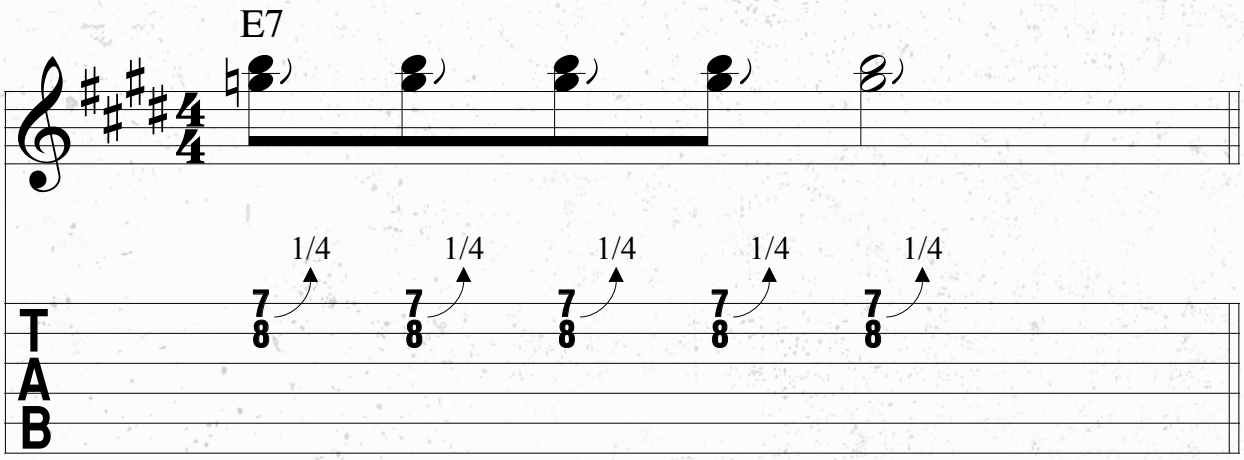
When I first heard Jan Hammer's version of "Manic Depression" in 1979, I felt the lowdown and shaking chills. Here was an electronic keyboardist not only producing heavily distorted, convincing guitar-like tones and phrasing, but he was also "bending" pitches with gusto! I was sure it spelled doom for us guitarists. Fortunately I was very wrong. Upon reflection, and after some therapeutic picking, I realized that no mechanical apparatus could truly duplicate the subtleties of fingers directly manipulating vibrating strings, creating real time bent pitches. And, while some think the tenor saxophone comes closest to imitating the human voice, my money is on stringed instruments – particularly guitars where swooping, nuanced, melismatic bends offer unlimited expressive possibilities.

The following is a selection of classic string-bending licks and riffs.

Along with teaching private lessons in NYC, **Dave Rubin** has written over 100 blues, classic rock, jazz, and country guitar books for the Hal Leonard Corporation. His latest is Inside Rock Guitar: Four Decades of the Greatest Electric Rock Guitarists.

www.musicdispatch.com

Fig. 1



The blues "train whistle" in **Fig. 1** may not be the first time it appeared on record, but it was on a landmark blues extolling the virtues of a sweet "promised land" implying an escape from the Delta. Devil deals optional. Bend the G note with the middle finger while being careful not to push it to a half-step, which will create a whole different effect.

The city referenced in **Fig. 1** produced an inordinate number of string-choking masters including this firebrand. He had the temerity, curiosity, and determination to go as an "interloper" into the "home of the blues" where he was warmly – if curiously – welcomed, and learned at the feet of the legends.

Fig. 2

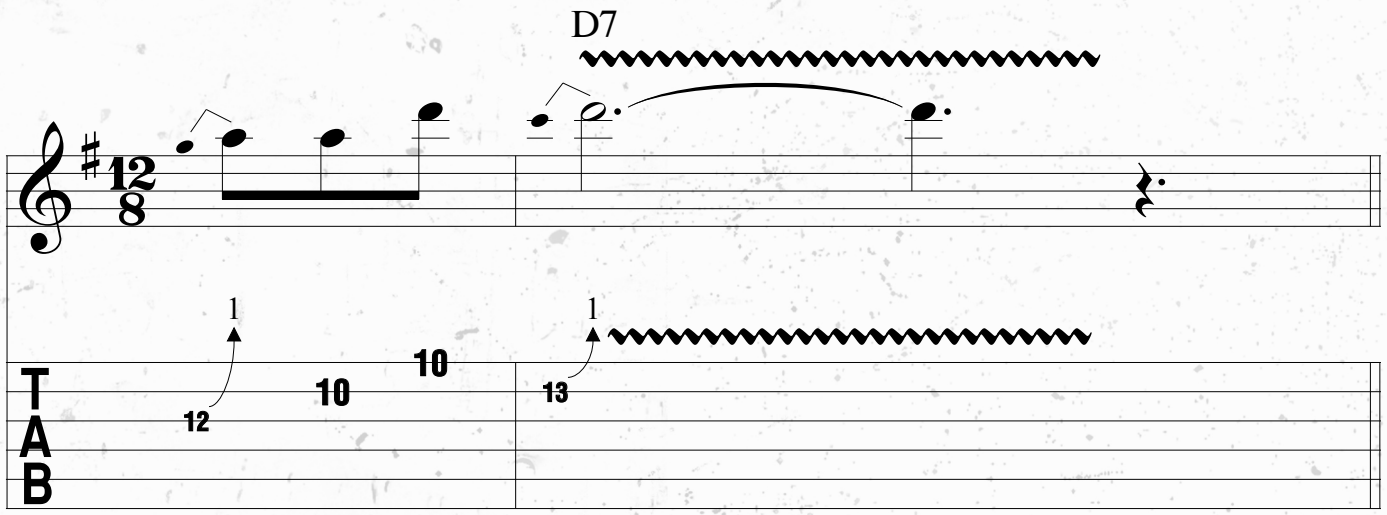
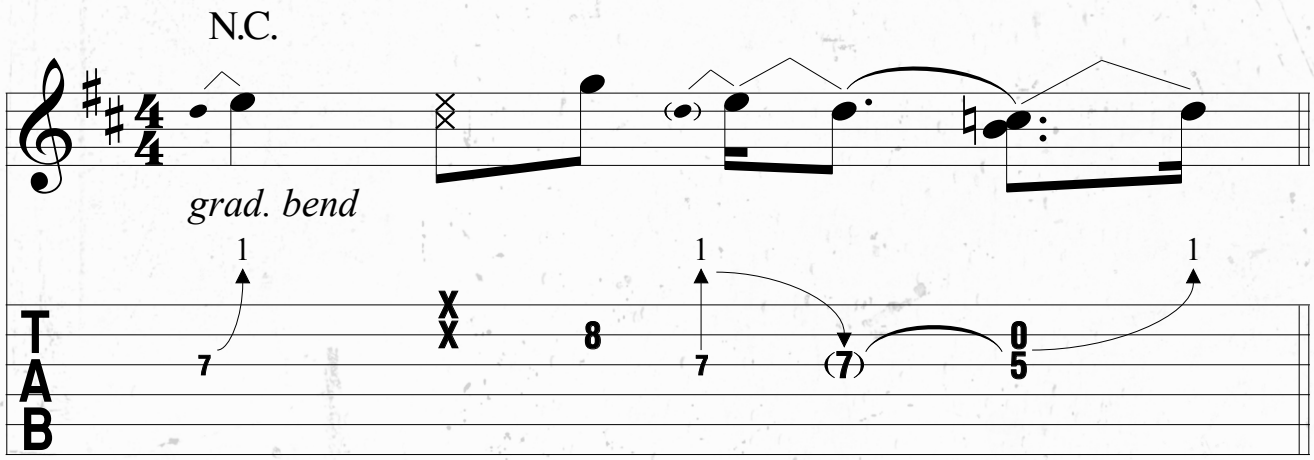


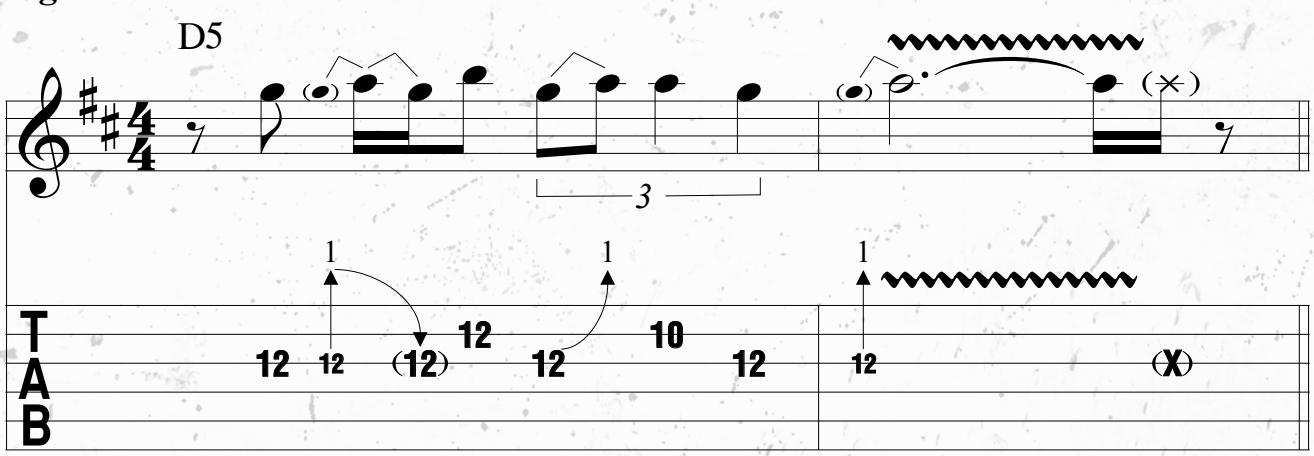
Fig. 2 is "Blues Guitar 101" and has been played countless times by numerous artists. The young buck in question paid "super" tribute to perhaps the postwar electric blues guitar string bender. Bend the G with the ring finger and the C with the pinky backed up by the remaining three fingers for maximum control and strength.

Fig. 3



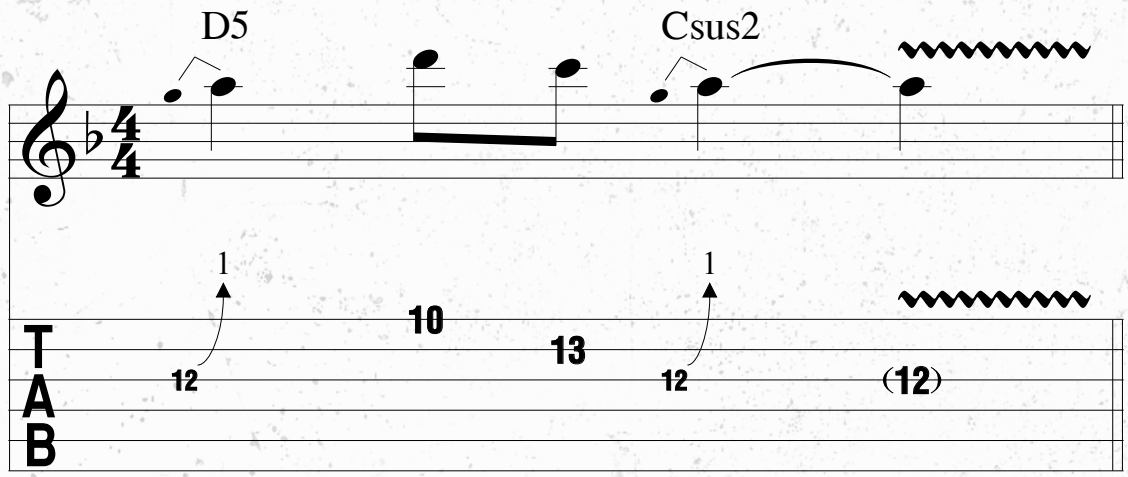
If you understand the musical evolution James Brown traversed from the late 50s to the mid-60s, then you have a clue as to what a wry, extraordinarily talented, Midwestern guitarist may have been thinking for his timeless "odiferous" instrumental with the bluesy intro lick in **Fig. 3**. A little later in his career he would venture to the "land of California" and make more rock history. Bend the D notes with the ring finger and push up with the index for the C, being careful not to mute string 2 open.

Fig. 4



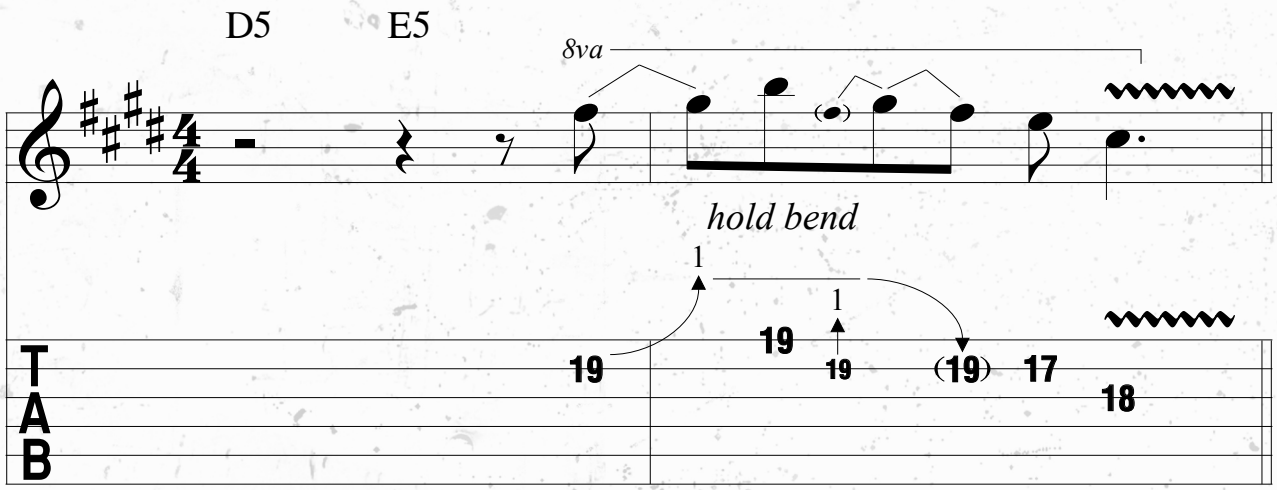
It is a well-worn story how British blues guitarists in the 60s "turned around" the blues and sent it back to America amped up and revitalized. **Fig. 4** appears in the "sunny" solo of a blues "deity" and starts a 1934 standard popularized by a "mooning" doo-wop group in 1961. It will take some quick shifts with the ring finger to bend the G and B notes.

Fig. 5



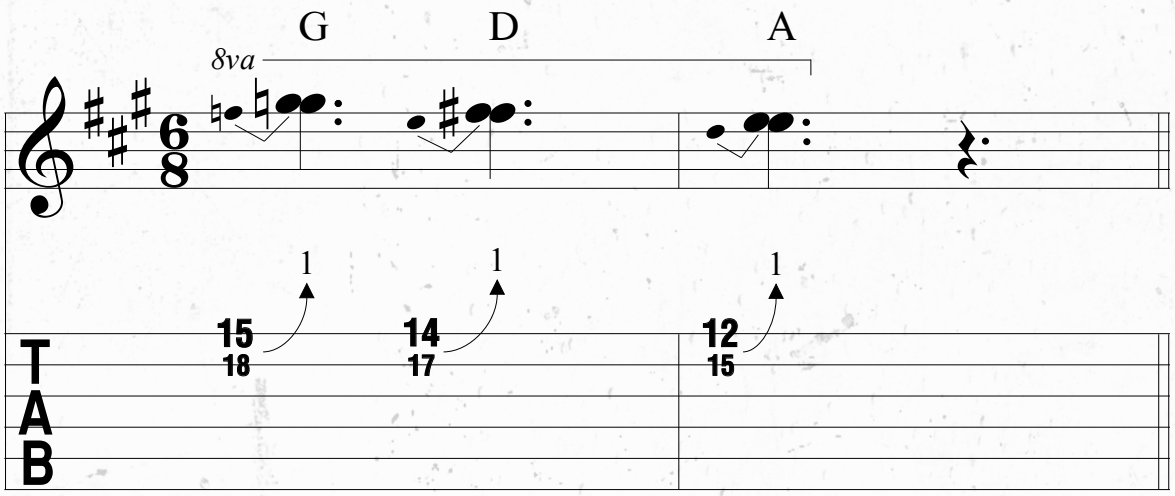
The same guitarist used his "slow hand" and his "fast foot" to wah wah his way to rock immortality with the blues-powered lick in **Fig. 5**, which could be termed "Blues Guitar 102." Bend the G with the (*what else?*) ring finger followed by the index for the D, and the pinky for the C. Be aware of the string 3 bend with the ring finger in the root position of the blues, or minor pentatonic scale – it's unquestionably the most executed bend in blues and rock music.

Fig. 6



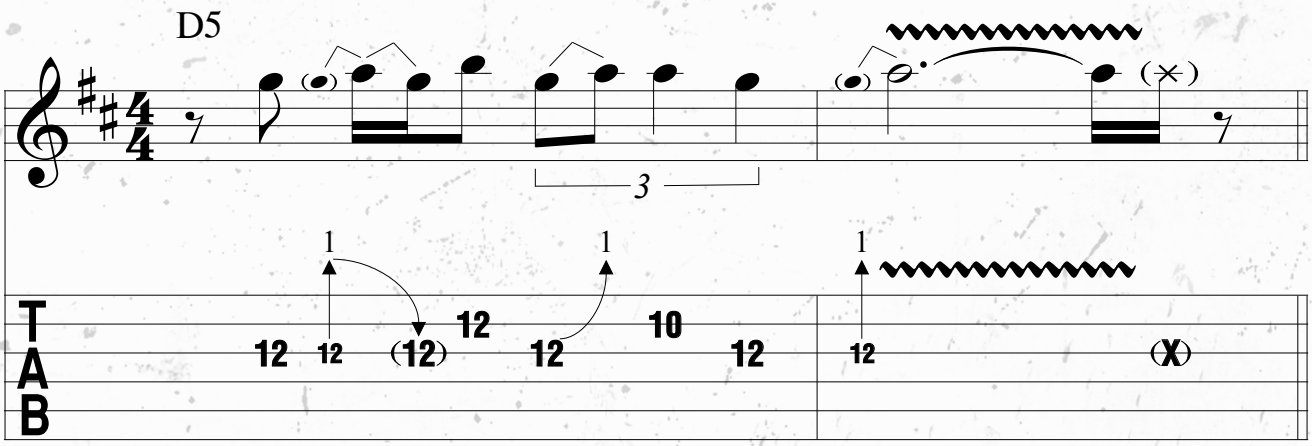
The "creamy" string-bending style of this triple Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee spotlighted above had a huge influence on another huge American guitarist. He used his "proletariat" Les Paul Jr. with the single P-90 "pup" roaring through a Marshall stack to honor, or perhaps ogle, a comely southern female ruler as seen in **Fig. 6**. Again, bend with the ring finger and access the B note with the pinky, while holding the bend for the sound of a sweet 3rd.

Fig. 7



The late, barrel-chested, British soul singer had "a little help" from a fellow Englishman and guitar virtuoso who had long ago avoided lucrative session work to form one of the all-time legendary blues-rock bands. In **Fig. 7** he utilized descending unison bends in a technique popularized by Jimi Hendrix. Bend with the pinky backed up by the ring and middle fingers.

Fig. 8



The two vaunted original guitarists of the premier Southern rock band regularly moved outside blues and minor pentatonic scales to mine the melodic major pentatonic scale. In **Fig. 8** the "second" guitarist played the solos on the version of a "brother's" song recorded in tribute to the fallen idol. Play the B note with the index finger and the bend with the ring or pinky finger. Either way, always back up all bends with the remaining fingers. ■

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SONGS THAT CHANGED YOUR LIFE

by John Stix

BRIAN SETZER

Positive, life-changing events happen every day. With guitarists it often starts with a song. For me, that song was the Animals' version of "House of the Rising Sun." Those chords – Am, C, D, F, Am, C, and E – kept on repeating in a circular pattern while I fingerpicked the notes with my right hand. Of course, there was the heavy lifting of the F chord that was always just coming up or just leaving. Between the fingerpicking and the dreaded F chord, it was a good thing I didn't have to sing along. That song pushed the limits of my beginner's ability. So in that spirit, I thought it would be fun to ask some classic players about musical moments that changed their lives.

It was probably "Johnny B. Goode." I remember discovering Slinky strings. I couldn't figure out how Chuck Berry could bend that part in "Johnny B. Goode." I was 10 years old. Nobody knew or said anything. And one day I had to buy new strings for my guitar. The salesman said, "What gauge do you want?" I said, "I don't know what that means." I had these big jazz guitar strings. The guy probably said, "Well, you are skinny little kid. Why don't you take this set." I put them on the guitar and realized that's how rock guitarists get that sound. I was blown away. So that's how you do it. I was fascinated with it. You can actually bend the strings. I didn't know that.

STEVE VAI

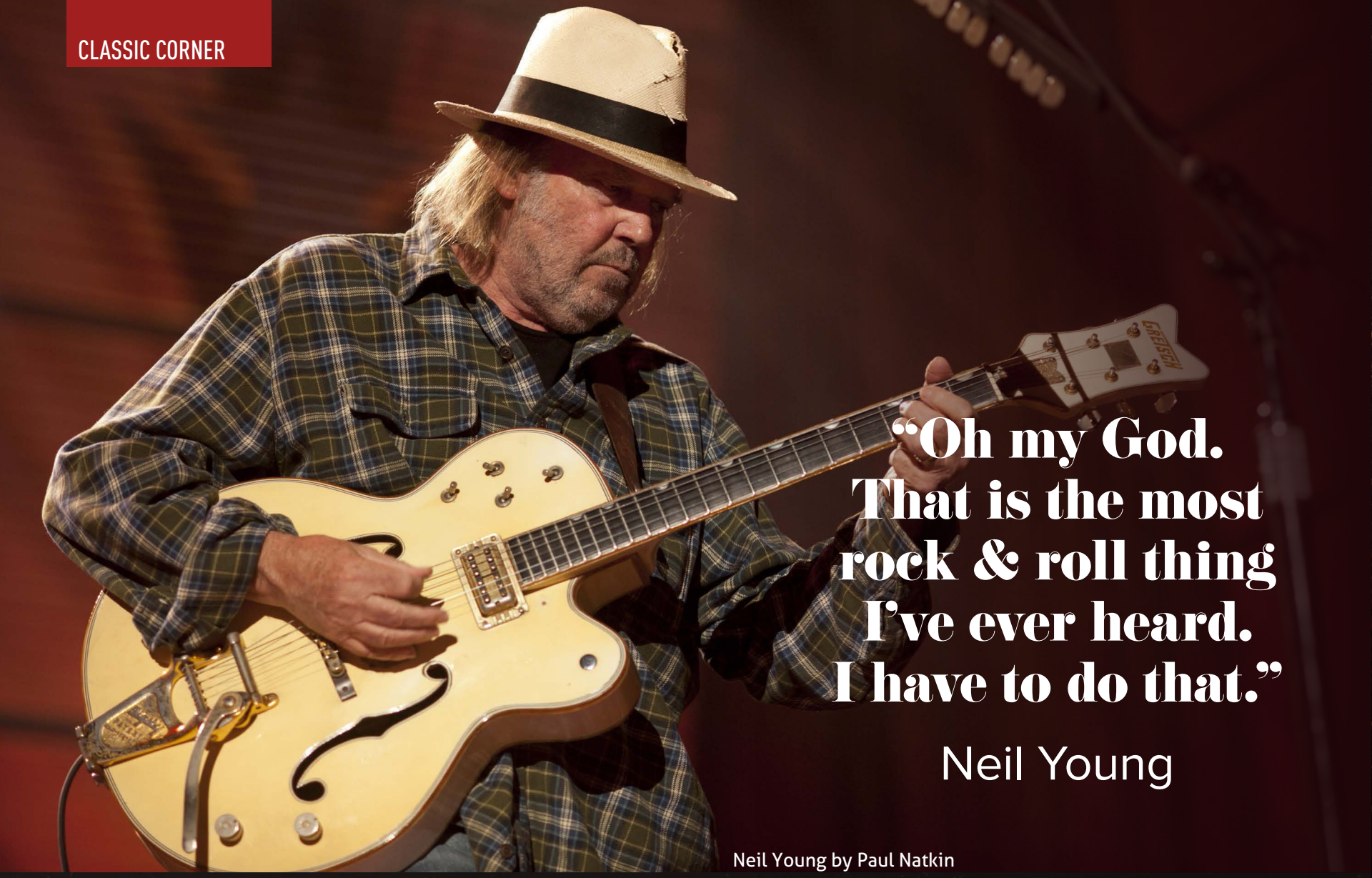
"Heartbreaker" by Led Zeppelin. I would play that unaccompanied solo – do it for about a day. He was bending the string at the nut. Then I would hack when it was really grinding because nobody could really play that solo like Page. It was just a flurry of notes. That was the biggest song for me. That really inspired me to be a guitarist. I used to bring my friends over to listen to it. I knew what sound-on-sound recording was and I thought that solo was overdubbed with two guitars. I would say, "listen to this. This is one guitar – one guy playing." And I thought I was lying. I thought he had overdubbed it because it was just a flurry of notes. When you listen to it now, with today's guitar standards, it sounds different. But still, when that song comes on the radio – that or "Black Dog," there is no way I can carry on a conversation with anybody. I'm still stunned.

Steve Vai by Gene Kirkland

NEIL YOUNG

Music is history. It is for everybody and everybody has their own favorites. There's a song called "Bop-a-Lena" by Ronnie Self (1958) that was pretty radical. When I first heard that I went, "Oh my God. That is the most rock & roll thing I've ever heard. I have to do that."

Neil Young by Paul Natkin



“Oh my God. That is the most rock & roll thing I’ve ever heard. I have to do that.”

Neil Young

Neil Young by Paul Natkin

“Bop a Lena” by Ronnie Self

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Paul Barrere Little Feat
by Paul Natkin

4 PAUL BARRERE (LITTLE FEAT)

It would have to be Jimmy Reed's "Baby What You Want Me to Do," because that really got me into playing the guitar. Jimi Hendrix's the entire *Are You Experienced* record, because that's what got me to turn up. And then something in the realm of either Muddy Waters or maybe Ry Cooder's "Tattler," which got me to think in terms of being more melodic and more creative with the slide guitar.

5 GEDDY LEE (RUSH)

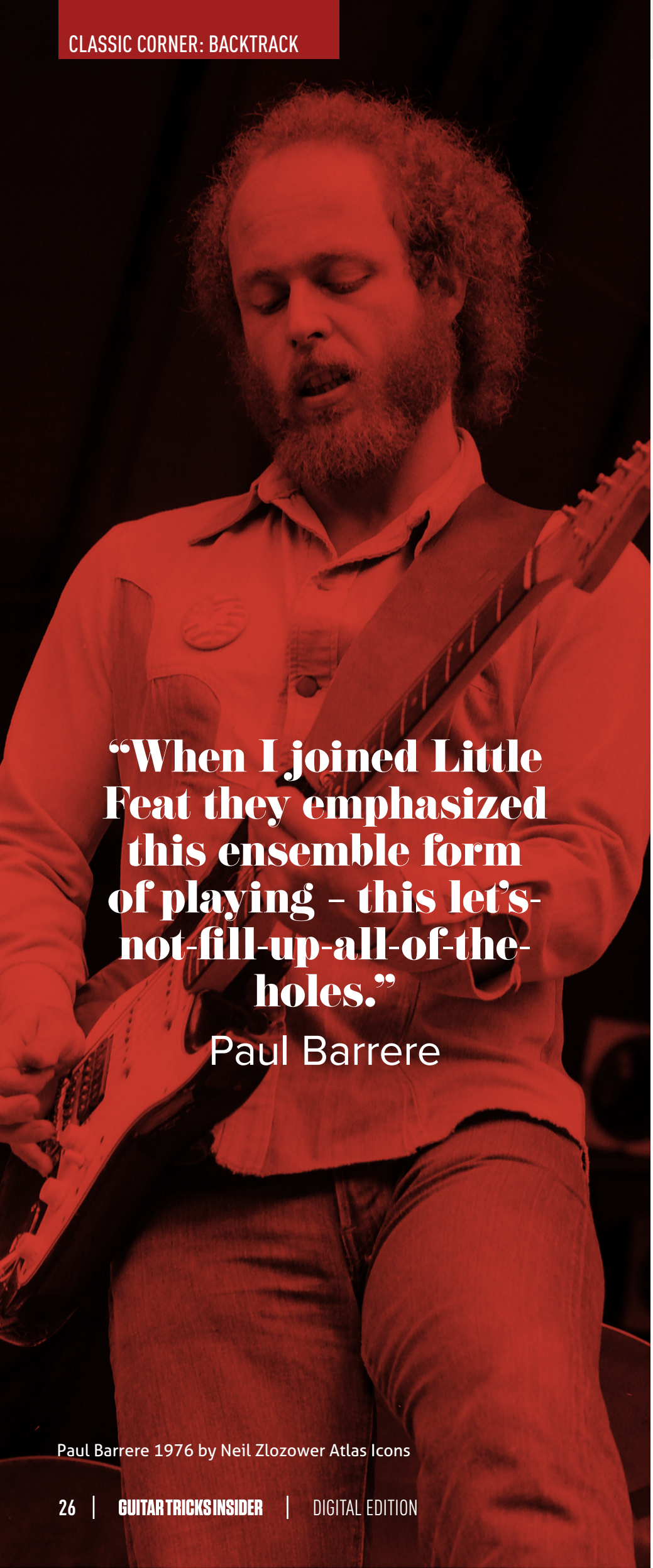
Geddy Lee by Paul Natkin

The first song I ever learned to play on the guitar was "For Your Love" by the Yardbirds. That's a very important song for me. I learned it on a beautiful guitar with palm trees painted on each side of the bridge. I don't know what happened to it. Somebody showed me a few chords and I figured out the song. It's a basic chord progression. The next song I tried to learn was Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman." When The Yardbirds were happening I was just getting off on music for the first time. I think "For Your Love" is still a great song. There is something fundamentally rock about it. It's got dramatic chords, classic song structure especially if you compare it with modern hard rock. You won't see every much difference in structure and that was a very long time ago. They were doing it back then. Why are we still doing it now? We should be ashamed of ourselves in some ways. ■

"The first song I learned to play on the guitar was "For Your Love" by the Yardbirds. It is still a great song"

Geddy Lee

"For Your Love" by The Yardbirds



“When I joined Little Feat they emphasized this ensemble form of playing – this let’s-not-fill-up-all-of-the-holes.”

Paul Barrere

Paul Barrere 1976 by Neil Zlozower Atlas Icons

Paul Barrere and the origin of Little Feat’s “All that You Dream”

by John Stix

We put the original demo on the box set. With where that song started and where it finally wound up, with the addition of John Hall and Lowell’s part and my parts all blending together, it became quite beautiful.

Did you hear all those guitar parts when you were doing the song, or was it building a foundation and saying let’s see what we can play with?

Let’s start with a good foundation and build on top of it.

What was the genesis of the song?

Gordon DeWitty, who is a great modern keyboard player. He played with Delaney & Bonnie for a little while when Sam (Clayton, on percussion) and Kenny (Gradney, on bass) were with Delaney & Bonnie. So I got introduced through Sam. He lived not far from where Sam and I were living on Laurel Canyon. We

Little Feet Lowell George by Paul Natkin

would go over and sit down and play. He was way off into Al Green stuff, so we would sit there and jam on some Al Green kind of feels –"Let's Stay Together," "Love and Happiness," and all that kind of stuff. I was digging this groove. So I went home and started playing off that groove and that's where I came up with "All That You Dream." At this point in my career I didn't have the vocal chops to really cover the sound. But I had the idea of the song. It was about myself and a girl that I had just broken up with. I envisioned it as being a single. It ran the whole gamut of boy falls in love, boy gets girl, boy loses girl, sun shines, and film at 11:00. There was a happy ending to it all even though it was a sad story to begin with. Musically it was one of the best things I'd ever written. I went to Billy (Payne, on keyboards and vocals) to get that whole center section of chord changes, because he's just so good at that. It was the best of both worlds. I got Billy to throw in the sweet, jazzy chords. I made the demo, played it for Lowell (George, on guitar and vocals), and he hated it. Not only did he hate it, he would barely listen to it. It was George Massenburg who kept whistling the hook. There is a hook to that song which is undeniable. Finally Lowell said, "What the hell is that?" George whipped out the demo tape for him. Lowell finally came and said, "you know, that song ain't so bad after all. But I'd like to do some arrangement stuff on it." I said "Great, let's do it." That's where we came up with (the) beginning of just taking the tie going over the chord and running with that. It's pretty cool.

How did John Hall (Orleans) come to record on it?

On that particular version, from the *Last Record Album*, it was kind of like connect the dots and fill in the spaces really. The basic track was recorded with just myself playing guitar and the band. Then Lowell went in and did some of his slide parts. It was basically take a three-beat break and come in and do your thing there. That was all worked out in the arrangement from the get go. And then we figured there was space there for a guitarist like John Hall to come in and put his touch on it. At the same time we were doing that recording, Bonnie Raitt was doing a record and John was working on that. Lowell was working on that, too. Everybody was in and out of one studio and over to the other. Lowell said, "John, you play this style so really cool. Why

don't you come over and sit in and play it?" He didn't even ask me if it was cool. John came over and did this. After the fact I didn't care. It was fine. I just wanted my song to be up there. I love John and I love the way he plays, so I wasn't going to bother him. I have never been that egotistical about who is playing on what. I'm playing the single tonic note and the chords going up. John is playing most of the filigree stuff in-between and Lowell plays slide.

When I joined Little Feat they emphasized this ensemble form of playing – this let's-not-fill-up-all-of-the-holes. The space between notes is just as important as the note itself. So there was this wonderful nip and tuck, give and take kind of thing going on. It really helped me form that whole rhythm style of playing. And there's always been something very rhythmic in my soloing. I'm not the most fluid of soloists; but I tend to kind of go at is as kind of rhythmically syncopated. ■

"All That You Dream" by Little Feat

Sound Advice

Steve Miller

By John Stix

Steve Miller knows how to throw a hook. Yes, there was the controversy with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame where Miller said the institution should be revamped from top to bottom. But the reason he got to the Hall of Fame in the first place was because, for Steve Miller, delivering hooks is second nature. He's been throwing them at us since the late 60s. With Les Paul as his godfather and T-Bone Walker his one-on-one musical mentor, his twin punches of radio-friendly, blues-infused songs has been a constant source of pleasure. When people say the blues had a baby and they named it rock 'n' roll, they are talking about the family of songs Steve Miller has fathered. Songs like "Space Cowboy," Jet Airliner," "The Joker," "Fly Like an Eagle," "Take the Money and Run," "Living in the U.S.A.," "Rock'n Me," "Swing Town," "Jungle Love," "Abracadabra," and "Dance Dance Dance." With so many smack down hits in evidence, I spent a few minutes with Steve as he offered sound advice about hooks and songs and how to deliver them.

"Take the Money and Run" is an example of how you are a master of doing an introduction before the songs actually start. And that intro may or may not have anything to do with the rest of it.

Right (laughs). Part of the test of all this stuff is to make a single that would be played on the radio. I grew up knowing Les Paul, so from the age of five I knew that he was always trying to get hit singles on the radio. I look at singles as compressed, compact, very quick, and fresh. They have to catch people right away. So one of the things we would always do is come up with an intro. We were always trying to get the intro to be no more than 10 seconds, which is enough to establish that something was going to happen. You had to establish the listener's interest immediately and then move right into something else. Do you remember back to what top 40 was like? It was a real fast-paced and moving kind of thing. You had to hit it and get right with it. So there were always intros.

In this case it was a drum hook.

Right. I would work with Gary Mallaber and say, "I've got this song and I want you to do the drum intro." I would know that I would want it to be a drum intro. I was real specific about everything on the tunes – exact bass lines and stuff – because I had played with all these tunes a lot on my multi-track at home. I had them just the way I wanted them. I went into the studio with the guys and we cut all the tracks for *Fly Like An Eagle and Book of Dreams* in 11 days. Then I took them home and worked on them for two years.

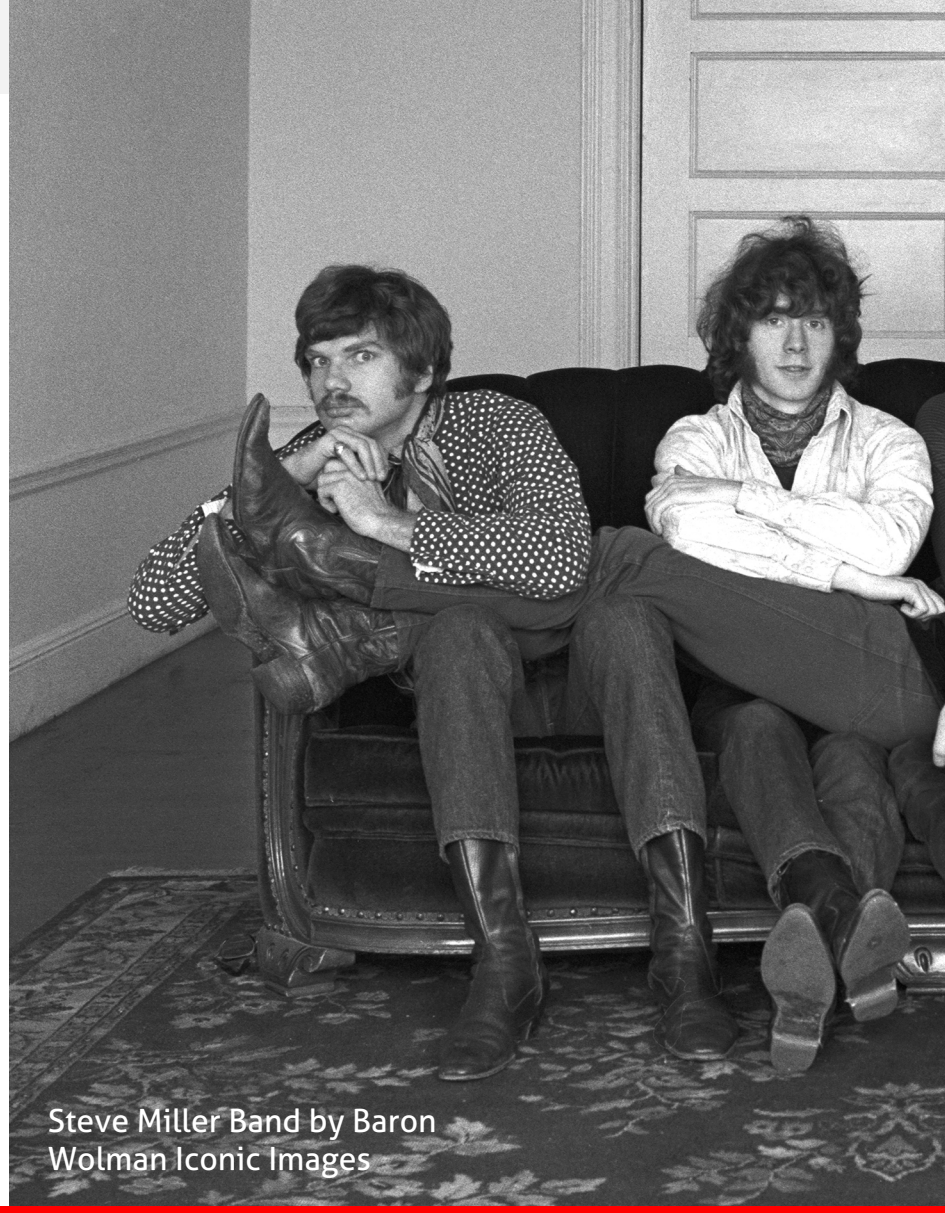
Steve Miller by Baron Wolman Iconic Images

What is the inspiration behind "Take the Money and Run"?

Nothing. It's a Bonnie and Clyde kind of story. A lot of times, it's not like you spend humungous amounts of time on lyrics if you've got a great chorus like "Take the Money and Run." Most of these songs, when I take them apart, I see there will be five hooks. The intro will be a hook. The chorus will be a hook. The verse will be a hook. There will be a guitar fill that gets repeated that will be a hook. There will be drum figures that people hear that are repeated over. When you get five really great hooks and you get them all rolling together, people cannot resist.

One of the hooks in "Take the Money" is the cool handclaps!

A lot of my friends gave me a real hard time about that. One of them, Herbie Herbert, used to come up to me and go clap, clap, clap, "Ooh,



Steve Miller Band by Baron Wolman Iconic Images

"Take The Money And Run" by Steve Miller

“I really severely edit myself. What I put on record is boiled down from what I may do as I’m developing it. I am constantly making things simpler.”

Steve.” Later he was at one of my shows where he saw 22,000 people go clap, clap, clap. That was one of the high points in my career.

Is there a special songwriter gene that allows you to know that those few chords are good enough to be the foundation of a song?

I think there is. It becomes taste. I really severely edit myself. What I put on record is boiled down from what I may do as I’m developing it. I am constantly making things simpler. You know one good groove is worth 400 bad lines and chord changes. I think that’s always the truth. If the groove is really good maybe you change it once in a song. That’s one of the hooks. You start changing it four times or there is too much stuff going on that is not interesting, or it detracts from the story, or the lyrics, or whatever. Then it’s too much.

By the same token, those parameters forced you to craft some great songs, which may have been greater because of the limitations that were put on you.

Yeah, I think that there is a lot of truth to that. When you say I’m going to write songs for radio – when you finally get that clear in your mind – what it is these songs are supposed to do – then you know [to] ask yourself, *is this a song that is going to lead your album?* It’s going to help you tour; it’s going to help you get a bigger crew and a better stage, and a much bigger audience, then you write that, too. You have to come up to that. Sometimes it can create a new form. We hit right when AM radio was its peak and then AM lost it to FM radio, which took it over. I really hit with “Fly Like An Eagle.” “The Joker” was the first one – that was in ’74. “Fly Like An Eagle” was in ’75-’76. *Book of Dreams* was in ’77. In 1978 AM radio got overtaken by FM, so I had songs like “The Joker.” Anything I did was automatically played on FM radio. They played me day and night, just like classic radio does now. That’s what FM radio was then. They would

play the entire *Fly Like An Eagle* album – the whole thing, both sides, for days, for months. That would be the programming for that half hour. The big challenge was to get AM radio to pick up on it. They picked up on the single "The Joker." That song had a slide guitar solo on it that they cut out. That was an unnecessary 18 seconds that they didn't want to give away. Then on *Fly Like An Eagle* there were long jams. The recorded version is a very tight version of what we would do on the stage. On stage its 12 minutes long. Always has been. It was written as a stage song, as a song to play for the audience. The live thing was developed while we were on the road. When it comes time to put it on the record you just have to distill it down – make it clean, right to the point. It's very good. And I agree with you that that kind of discipline makes you edit yourself down to just the purist ideas. It's tough to write a single. It's like writing a Broadway show. There's a lot of stuff that goes into it. ■

Steve Miller Live by Larry Marano
Atlas Icons

"The Joker" by Steve Miller

PORTRAITS IN TONE

Richie Kotzen

"The great thing about the RK5 Fly Rig is that I now have my ideal pedalboard with the effects I use most, which is reverb, delay and overdrive, in a tiny little box that I can literally put in my backpack. So I'm carrying my guitar rig, for the most part, in my backpack.

"What makes the RK5 so different from the standard Fly Rig is the overdrive circuit. This is something that Andrew [Barta, president of Tech 21] and I spent a good 6 months designing --going back and forth, trying to verbalize what audio qualities I wanted. And finally we came to what we call the OMG section.

Actual size: 11.5"l x 2.5"w x 1.25"h • Weight: 18.6 oz.

"The thing that's really cool about it is Andrew put in the SansAmp. And what that enables you to do is literally revoice any amp. I can plug into a really clean amp and get my sound the same way I can plug into a dirty amp and get my sound. So you can get a great sound live through an amp, and, if the amp goes down, by using the Sans-Amp, you can literally plug right into the PA and get a fantastic guitar tone.

"Beyond putting the RK5 in front of an amp, you can also use it direct. I took this pedal into the studio for The Winery Dogs 'Hot Streak' record. There's a song, in particular, called 'The Lamb,' with a middle solo section where you can really hear the Tech 21 RK5 direct.

"So this pedal is very versatile, it's very convenient, extremely reliable, built to perfection."

-- Richie Kotzen

Photo by Michael Mechnig

The Richie Kotzen OMG Signature Overdrive is also available as a stand-alone pedal.

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One moment he's talking about notes that stink and licks of sensuality. Then in another he's pleading for brotherhood and spiritual consciousness. Only one man lives so easily crying out his music to the heavens while his feet remain bare in the mud. It's Carlos Santana. His guitar speaks more eloquently then most lyricists. He is always asking us to shake it down with the band and lift our spirits and hearts toward helping the dancer next to us.

His latest effort to persuade the world to simultaneously dance and think is presented on *Santana IV*, an album that brings the old band back together. After the prolonged urging of guitarist Neal Schon, Santana reunited with Neal and Gregg Rolie (keys, vocals) Michael Shrieve (drums) and Michael Carabello (congas, percussion) for the first time in 45 years. Along with current band members Benny Rietveld (bass) and Karl Perazzo (timbales, percussion), they revisited old musical neighborhoods – minus the egos and heavy drug use that fueled their last effort, *Santana III*.

"Black Magic Woman/Oye Come Va (Snippet)" by Santana Reunion Band

Santana by Chris Schwegler Atlas Icon

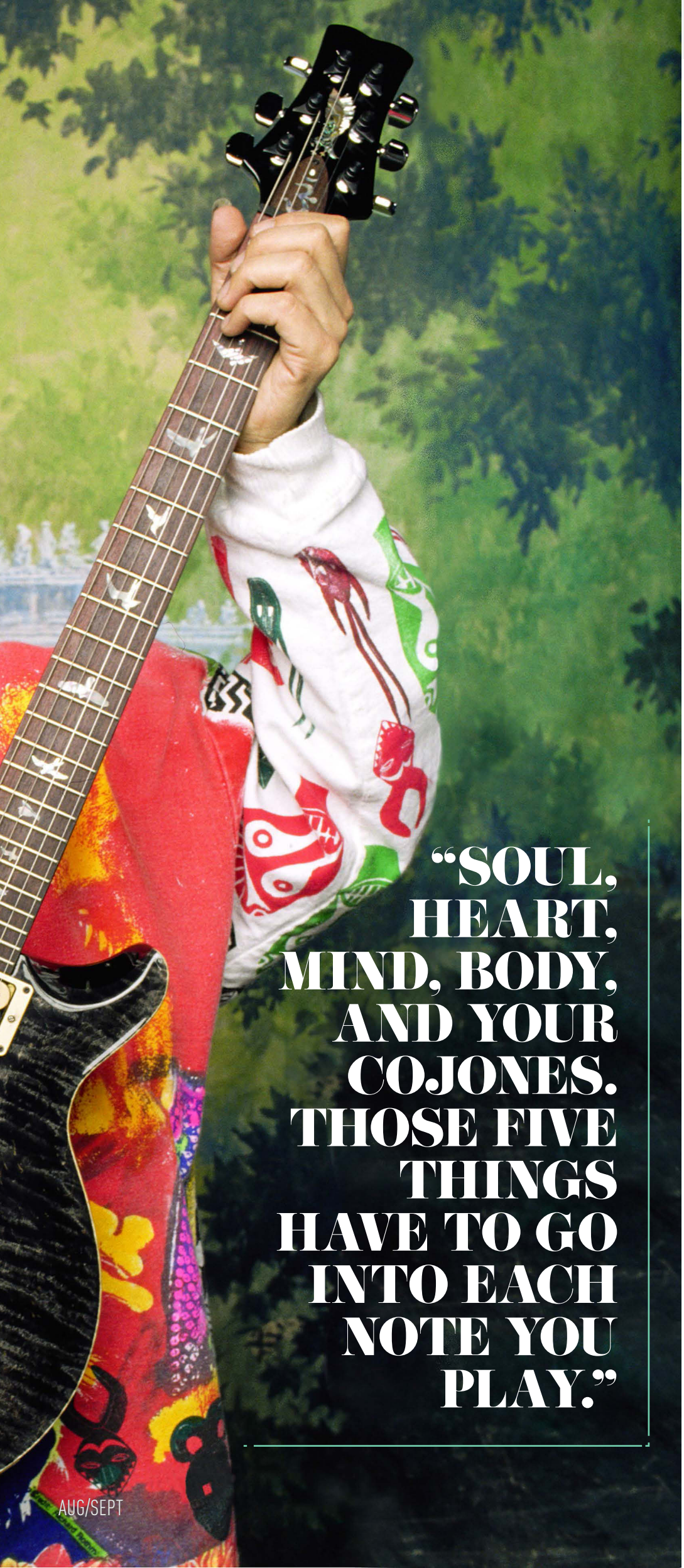
SANTANA

By **John Stix**

"I play music to heal myself and heal other people and bring the world closer," is the way he starts to answer my Charlie Rose-esque question of why do you play music? "I play music so people become aware that everything is in harmony – the planets, the weather, the birds. The only thing in disharmony is greed and lust, which is peoples egos, which is not the soul. So I play music so that people will dance together in Jerusalem – Palestinians and Hebrews. People can rejoice together in San Quentin – blacks, Latins, American Indians, and whites. I play music for that. That's when I get the greatest joy. Most people on this planet are dealing with duality – good and bad, the virgin and the whore. In music, whether it's by Peter Green or Eric Clapton, B.B. King or myself, we remind you that there's another gear: compassion and gratitude. Those are gears on a truck or in our lives and very few people shift to those gears. That's why I like playing music, man. I don't like playing music for this or that. Anybody can do this or that. I like playing music because you can actually change the rhythm, or the psyche, or people's lives. That's a great responsibility."

That responsibility is powered by one of the most recognizable guitar voices in music. Carlos Santana's guitar speaks with an authority the way James Earl Jones commanded his acting. That is to say, we buy what he is selling. And the result, as Eric Clapton has noted, is that "Carlos Santana can make you feel what he is feeling." Yet he does not take this super power for granted. "I am really grateful that guitar players before me made a voice out of the guitar," he explained. "Because before the guitar – was just background music. It was stomping chords, and then the trumpet, or the saxophone, or the singer would sing. Not until T-Bone Walker, or Charlie Christian, or Django Reinhardt did all of

Santana by Robert Knight



a sudden the guitar became a voice. I’d always rather hear the guitar than the vocalist. Nothing personal to anybody – I’m just that kind of guy. I love the voice of the guitar. I can hardly wait for people to stop singing so somebody can just play guitar. I love the voice of the guitar as a soloist. That’s why we love Peter Green, and early Eric Clapton, and now the new Eric Clapton.”

So what are the elements that make up a good solo? His answer: “Tone and oneness.” Refining it further, he brought it down to how to fill up one note and every note. He said, “A musician is a juggler. You’ve got to coordinate five things. If you put your hand in front of you, there are five things that have to go into one note: soul, heart, mind, body, and your cojones. Those five things have to go into each note you play.”

“I was born with the gift of music. We are all born with different gifts. I knew I was going to be a musician and I didn’t care about algebra or anything else in school. I just knew. It was either a blessing or curse. I knew when I was in junior high school and high school that nothing else would matter to me. The last day of Mission High School in San Francisco people were saying, ‘hey what are you going to do, man – tomorrow when you are out of school?’ I said I’m going to be playing with B.B. King and Michael Bloomfield, yada-yada-yada. They started laughing at me. I said, ‘why are you laughing?’ They said, ‘oh yeah, right.’ I said, ‘you can laugh all you want to but that’s what I’m going to do, man. I’m going to play with Michael Bloomfield and B.B. King and all these incredible people because that’s what I want to do. That’s who I am.’ For me it was easier because my laser beam concentration, once pointed determination, wouldn’t deter me from hanging around Miles Davis, or Jerry Garcia, or Bill Graham. I just knew that

that is what I wanted to be. Later on you learn about your notes and chords, and Fender amps or Marshalls, or Boogies or guitars – they are not so important as your principles or emotions. Those are really the tools."

While Santana knows he was born with this gift, he also knows that it is a talent that has to be nurtured. Here's what he suggests guitarists work on: "Keep bending notes until it doesn't sound whiny or weird – until it sounds like a voice. For example, learn to develop and crystallize your own fingerprints. In one note you can tell Eric Clapton from Jeff Beck – by one note. So learn to go inside that note. A lot of musicians play over the note. They don't get inside the note. It's like a beer that has a lid. You can't get inside of it. Learn to open it up and go inside of it. Get wet with it. The first rule of music is if you feel it, people are going to feel it. If you don't feel it, why in the hell should they? That's the first rule of music. So learn to feel. You have to do certain things with your body and heart. Like I told you: soul, heart, mind, body, and cojones. You have to connect all of those things so when you hit that note it's more than a Paul Reed Smith guitar, or GHS strings, or a Mesa Boogie. Listen to Peter Green play "Supernatural." It's more than a Fender amplifier and a Gibson guitar. That's what I'm talking about. That's what I want the kids to understand. Transcend the instrument. You are the instrument. You go inside and bring from within yourself that note that says: *Wow. THAT is a new person*."

The importance of being present and in-the-moment is also a major component of the Santana approach to playing. To explain, he used an analogy of planes landing at an airport: "When Kennedy airport gets backed up you see the planes going around and around. One plane is Marvin Gaye another plane is Bob Marley. There's like 50 planes of Jimi Hendrix alone that want to land. There are a lot of thoughts about Jimi Hendrix. *I'd love to play your music and*

"Supernatural" by John Mayall and The Bluesbreakers with Peter Green

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I'd like to accommodate you, but I also have to play my music. In the middle of the performance all this stuff is going and I'm sussing things out. I don't think I found my center, or my peace, or my bullseye. The basic example is that a lot of musicians don't give you the true sound. It's because their mind is too much in the way. If they are in Paris they can hardly wait to be in New York. If they are in New York they can hardly wait to be in Japan. So they are never [in] one place at the same time. That's what I call getting grounded and centered. When you are grounded and centered and you can be here now. Then all of a sudden I hit the note and I could feel that I'm getting all the way inside the note – because before that it was slippery. My mind had too many things on it."

The song where Carlos Santana first heard his own voice – the one he had been searching for – was "Samba Pa Ti." He explained, "It sounded very different from Michael Bloomfield, or Peter Green, or Eric Clapton. The first time I heard that I said, *ooh that sounds like somebody really personal*

"THE FIRST TIME I HEARD 'SAMBA PA TI' I SAID, OOH THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMEBODY REALLY PERSONAL AND DEAR TO ME."

Santana by Dave Plastik

and dear to me. You know what, a lot of people claim when they heard "Samba Pa Ti," whether I'm in Japan or Africa, that song is really personal to me. Obviously I touched something deep in myself and when the people listen to it, it touches something deep inside themselves that they relate to."

The Santana band of any vintage has always attracted men and woman, and like very few other guitarists (Clapton and John Mayer come to mind), is able to play a huge amount of guitar without losing the audience to instrumental fatigue. As is his way, Carlos responds to the question of the universality of his audience with equal visions of the heart and cojones. "I think it's because of the sound. When I started with the first band, even before we recorded the first album, even then, people would just stop and start dancing and get spiritually horny – that spiritual orgasm. So my music from the beginning has had two overtones: spiritual and sensuality. Hey, who doesn't crave for both? If you don't crave for either one, I think you are dead. I never thought of it. I always admire Sly Stone because he was the first one to have blacks, and whites, and women, and men, and everything – before Prince or anybody. I give it to Sly Stone but at the same time Sly Stone's music is really a party song. The sound that we have is not so much like a party. My music is more like a celebration. A party can be exclusive where a celebration is for everybody. I never read much into it. Bill Graham was the first one to tell me, "You're one of the few United Nations kind of bands." I've never been into music for entertainment purposes, but for the purposes of empowering people to their possibilities. That's how B.B. hit me. That's how Jimi hit me, or Peter Green. When I started, that's what they impregnated me with. When we were kids they used to say rebel without a cause. I'm a rebel with a cause."

SANTANA SPEAKS

pt. 1

For all of his well-spoken stories about music, Carlos Santana knows how to get these melodies, these feelings embedded into a recording. And while the words are lofty, the process is absolutely down to earth. This is part of a conversation we had, which started with preparing for the recording studio.

Is there something you can do in the studio to get there? Because I can say "Carlos, tomorrow I want you to go in and record something for me." You say, "Yeah, John. I'll go." And that day is going to be on a record. You want to be able to express yourself.

Preparation.

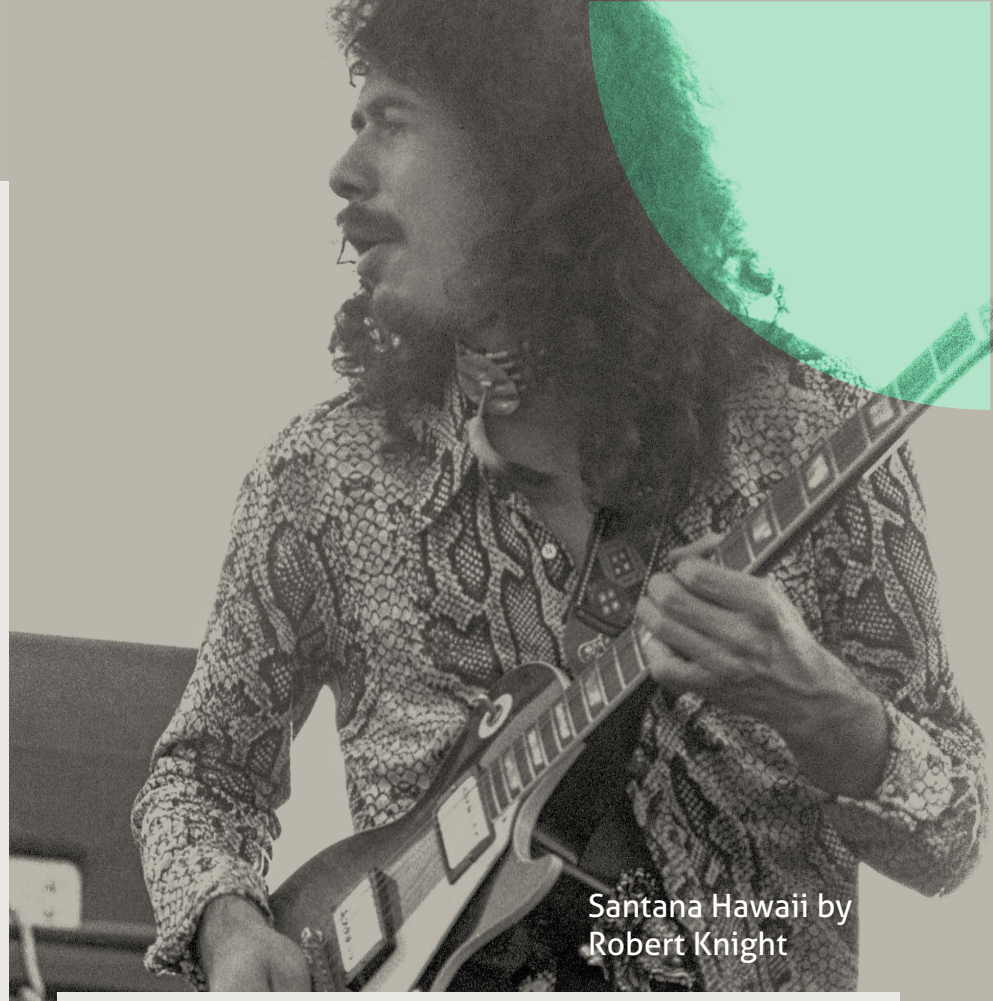
Preparation.

The preparation is to teach the engineer what my sound is. I relate to Vernon Reid. I relate to singers more than I do guitar players unless they are guitar players that have a voice. So, since I'm aware of singers' head tones, nasal tones, throat tones, chest tones and diaphragm tones, this is what I want the engineer to be aware of my music. So whether I play through a Boogie or a Marshall – whatever I play through, a Fender, I want him to capture all three things. Like this – let's say you're a photographer and I'm a photographer. You want to take a picture of a pond. Are you with me? You take a picture – the reflection of the pond, you see the sky and the clouds. Then on top you see flowers – petals flowing on top with the river, this lake. Then, if you look deep down you see a big fish and then you see all the way to the bottom. A good photographer should be able to capture all four. The way I learned guitar, through T-Bone and Wes Montgomery, people like that, I get all four in the sound. Today I don't get it through a lot of guitar players. To me, personality, individually, and uniqueness is the greatest thing that god gave to you. This is how we can tell Yngwie Malmsteen from Buddy Guy in two notes. So I avoid using pedals that make me sound like somebody else. Because I want to live and I want to teach the engineer. When they say, "what is your sound?" I don't get it. What do you mean? My guitar is not – I don't use batteries in my guitar and I don't use transistors for amplifiers. I use tubes. So to me, tubes is still flesh. Transistors is like Saran Wrap sound. That's not my sound so don't make me sound like that. Everybody in Los Angeles sounds like that or most people. Most people in New York sound like that. I don't wanna sound like that. So they say, "What is your sound?" They get really insecure – engineers. So I say open the door. As soon as you open the door, not necessarily the volume, the sound comes out like a prism of glass that you put up against the sun, and you see all the rainbow behind it. I don't just want to be yellows, the oranges. I want the whole rainbow. That's what my tone is about.

How do you take charge? Do you have a microphone that you like to use? Do you like a particular size room?

SANTANA SPEAKS

pt. 2



Santana Hawaii by Robert Knight

I work with them to put two or three different microphones in different places: one on the speaker, one in the room, and one in the back. So you get the whole picture, because as you can tell, that's what the ear picks up. The ear doesn't just pick up – like I told you the river. You pick up the whole thing. So we are constantly training people to listen to the whole thing. When I hit the sustain note, the note is equivalent to a grape. When I squeeze that note and it squirts and it gets you wet – that's what I want. I don't want the grape - you squeeze it and nothing comes out. So I want to be able to get you wet with my emotion. And the only way to do it is to create a thing with the engineer that gets them wet. Okay, certain notes I do 4 to 7 notes on the 7th note, I want it to jump out of the speakers and you just goose it a little bit and go back. This is what Jimi did. This is what Clapton did. This is what Jeff Beck did in the beginning – before all the engineers that you have. You cheat a little bit. You goose it up a little bit.

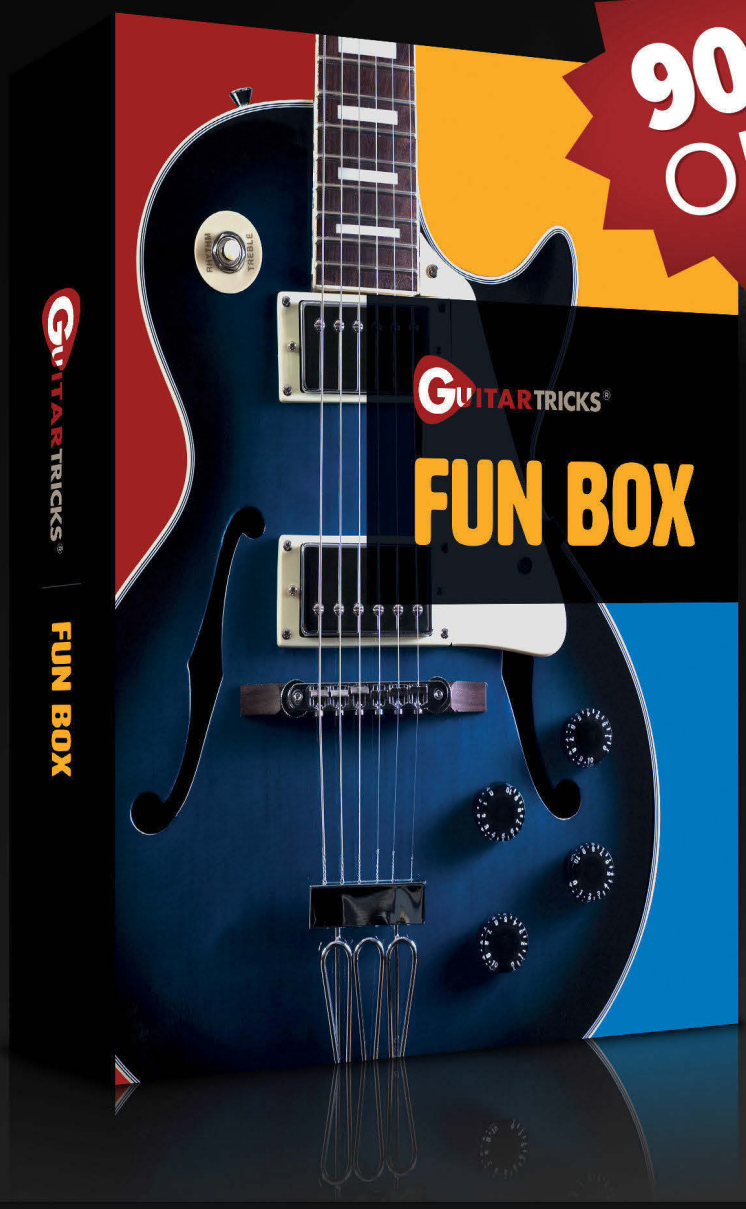
In the mix.

In the mix. So your voice is all of a sudden like, "uh, uh, uh, AHHHH!" You get that spillover and then duck it back up again.

And the people say, "Whoa. That note got me. Why didn't the other note get me?" Because you goosed that one a little bit. Because that's what I did when I did it. So it goes to spiritual and physical and you try to duplicate, sound-wise, what you did in the first place. Does that make sense?

Is there anything else for preparation?

I practice scales and I practice non-scales. Which is one-two-three, get inside the note. One-two-three, play one note that when you vibrate, it sounds like somebody holding you and moaning. Sometimes when a person moans – knows how to moan – it's like a universal song. You don't have to hear lyrics in Japanese, or Italian, or English, or anything. By the way John Lee Hooker moans – you know exactly what he's saying. I practice not to articulate the notes do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do. I practice to articulate human emotion. Maybe I think of Aretha. Maybe I think of Dionne Warwick in a certain phrase. So I practice the last note. That's the note that I practice. I forget the other notes and I get to the punchline, if you will. How I deliver the punchline, so whether you're playing blues or reggae or whatever you are playing, they say, "Man. That note." ■



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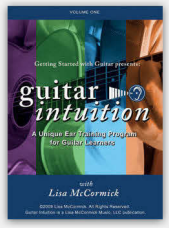
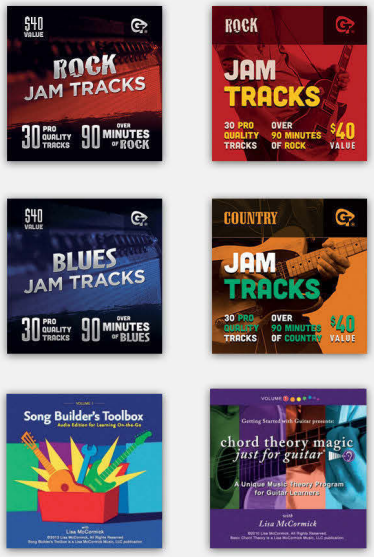




LISTEN HEAR

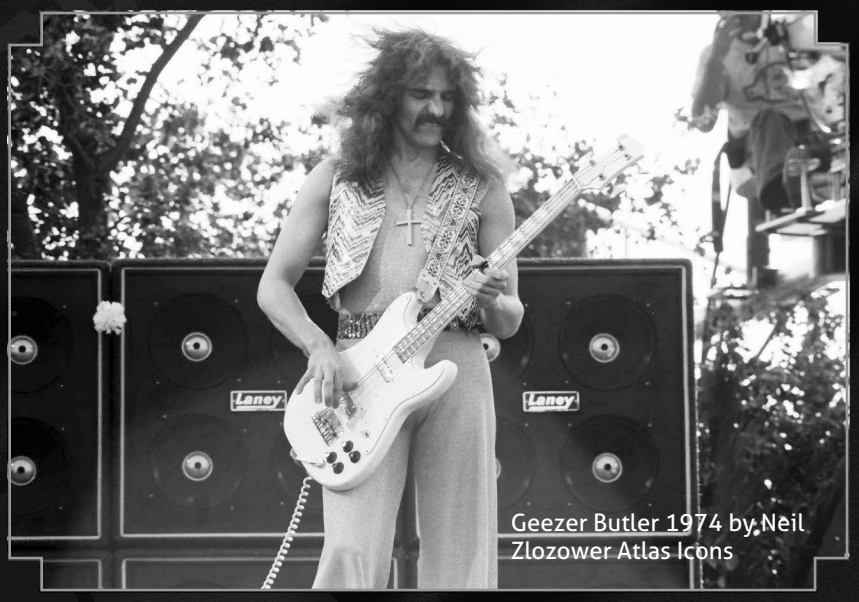
BLACK SABBATH

By John Stix

Some of the best advice I've ever heard for guitarists or bands looking to develop a sound came from Def Leppard's original guitarist, Steve Clark. In talking about the development of style, he suggested this: "Rather than copy the fashionable hero of the moment, find out where his influences come from and start from there. Then put in your own ideas and bring it up to today's standards."

Black Sabbath by Mark Weiss

So went this advice from a Leppard's lips to the ears of The Foo Fighters, Soundgarden, or even Metallica. As such, Black Sabbath's influence is heard in musicians decades younger giving the still contemporary band a new measure of importance – perhaps even bigger than in their heyday. So with contemporary rock and metal bands heralding an era of Sabbath superlatives, and keeping Steve Clark's words in mind, we looked into the musical roots of Black Sabbath. That is to say, the American blues masters.



Geezer Butler 1974 by Neil Zlozower Atlas Icons

Geezer Ten Years After was one of our heroes. Alvin Lee was billed as the fastest guitarist in Britain. One of our big breaks was when we did a gig with him. We supported Ten Years After and they really liked what we were doing. Alvin Lee got us a gig at the Marquee in London. That sort of started the ball rolling for us.

Did you aspire to play similar to this (Ten Years After)?

Tony We were doing virtually the same sort of thing, really. That's what we played.

So it was a jam band.

Geezer Yeah. All the stuff we had was all 12-bar blues when we first started.

With two vocal verses and 20 instrumental?

Tony We used to do a lot of Willie Dixon stuff and Howlin' Wolf, Lightin' Hopkins – all that sort of stuff. Muddy Waters.

That you would get off the records.

Geezer Yeah, we listened to the records and they were easy to play. So when we first got together we had a gig like in a week. We formed one day and then had a gig a week later! We had never played together. So we learned 18 12-bar blues numbers in a week.

And you just jammed.

Tony Yeah. That was it. It was great practice for learning how to play better, you know. It was mainly instrumental. We'd do a bit of vocal and then we did a ten-minute instrumental. It was good for us to do that.

Geezer We used to play clubs in Europe and we could just play away for hours. We did seven three-quarter of an hour spots a night, which was a good experience for us to be able to play stuff.

At that time there were hundreds of bands doing it. That was the way. You had a band. You usually formed a band, and you become a blues band, and you jammed, and then you formed into whatever music you were eventually known for.

Tony Today it seems like heavy metal sort of replaced what the blues was then. Everybody gets up and does "Paranoid," or "Smoke on the Water," or something instead of the old blues stuff.

Geezer Especially for me with the 12-bar blues. I had never played bass before. In fact, when we did the rehearsals it was on a Fender Telecaster because I used to play rhythm guitar. It was so easy to pick up 12-bar blues bass lines. That got me started. Once I was confident doing that, then I could go on to other things.

Tony It was a great way of going into what we do play now. It was a great experience. You keep playing all 12 bars – you knew what it was – just a 12-bar so you could start experimenting around them three chords.

Geezer Because it was so simple. Then you get bored of that, so you go on to some other bit and you can feel yourself progressing all the time. Then eventually you've got the background to go and write your own songs.

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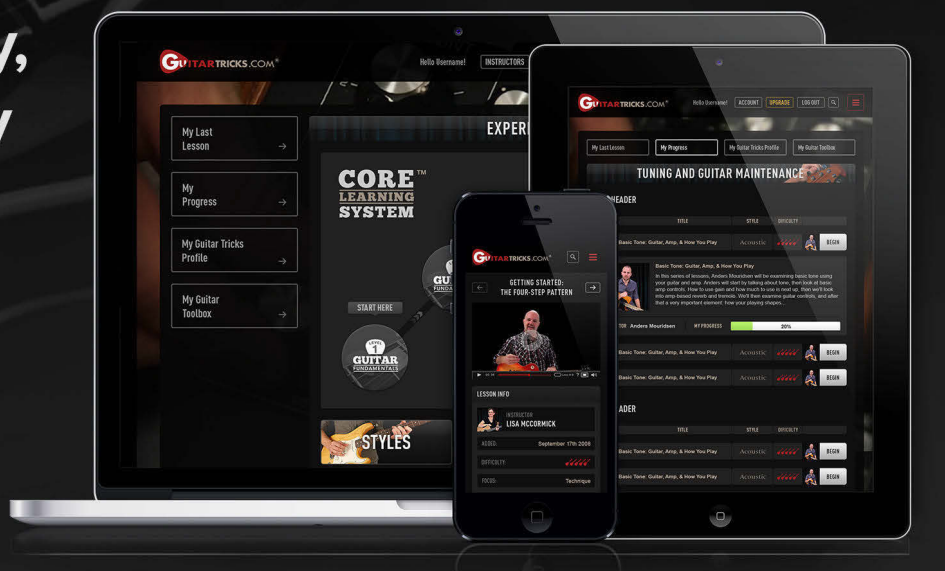

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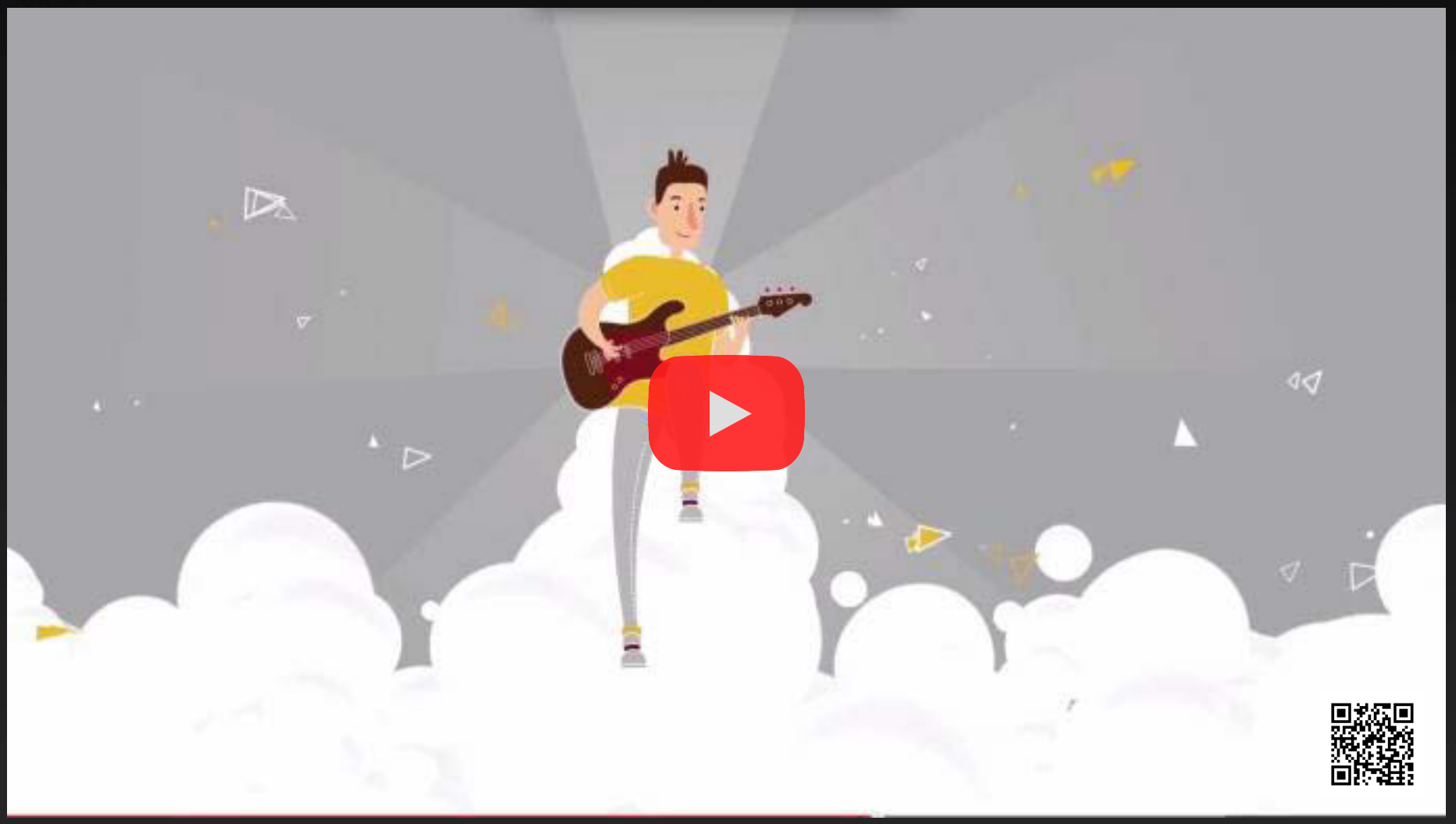


In your mind did you ever think *boy, it has to be as good as my heroes* – whether your hero's were Alvin Lee or whoever?

Geezer We knew we were up against bands that were just starting out like Ten Years After –Jethro Tull, Zeppelin had just started. And we all knew we had to be as good as them to make a go of it. And we all wanted to make a go of it. So we knew we had to practice every day and rehearse every day to get as good as that.

Tony We had to be good but different. In them days it was like every band was different. You had Ten Years After, Traffic, Tull – all playing different sorts of music.

It seems to me that is a healthier attitude.

Tony It is.

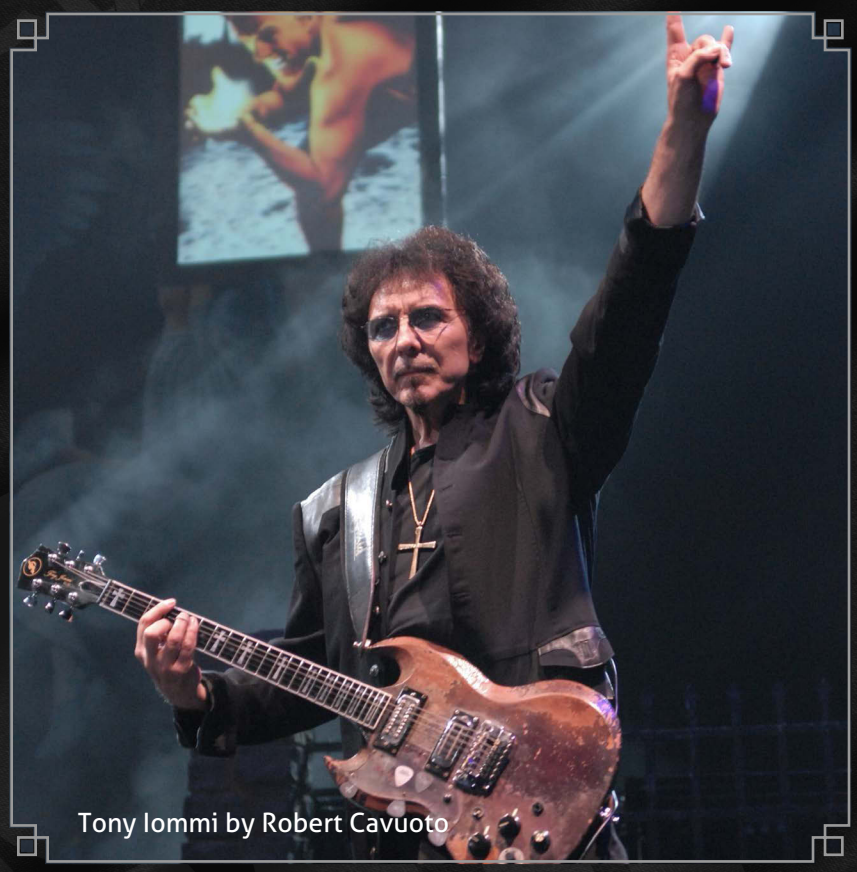
Geezer Whereas now, you've got a lot of bands doing heavy metal and that's it. Back then you had to be totally different from anybody else to get recognized. It still happens now but it seemed more adventurous then.

Tony You could put the radio on and tell who the different bands were. Nowadays it's difficult to tell who's who.

When business figured out they could make money on it, they could try and repeat a band.

Tony Oh yeah, absolutely.

But In the 60s and early 70s exactly as you said, Jethro Tull sounded like Tull, Sabbath sounded like Sabbath, ELP sounded like ELP. We talk about Hendrix and Cream and Zeppelin or any of these bands. All you guys – you didn't sound like each other at all. Would you consciously try and do that? Would you know that bit sounds like so and so, so we won't do it?



Tony Iommi by Robert Cavuoto

Tony Maybe we did. I don't know.

Geezer Yeah, if you did something that sounded like the Beatles or something, which we never did, that's just an example, then you would immediately drop it because there were so few bands around then. Then you'd know what everybody else was doing. The last thing in the world you wanted to do is sound like anybody else. So if you ever did that then you'd immediately drop it and go on to something else.

Tony You couldn't remotely be like anybody. In fact, we done one track where I played flute and immediately it was like Jethro Tull and it was nothing like Jethro Tull.

Geezer But because somebody else had used the flute and obviously you were like Jethro Tull.

In some wonderful way that idea established Sabbath and all of those other bands.

Tony Absolutely. ■

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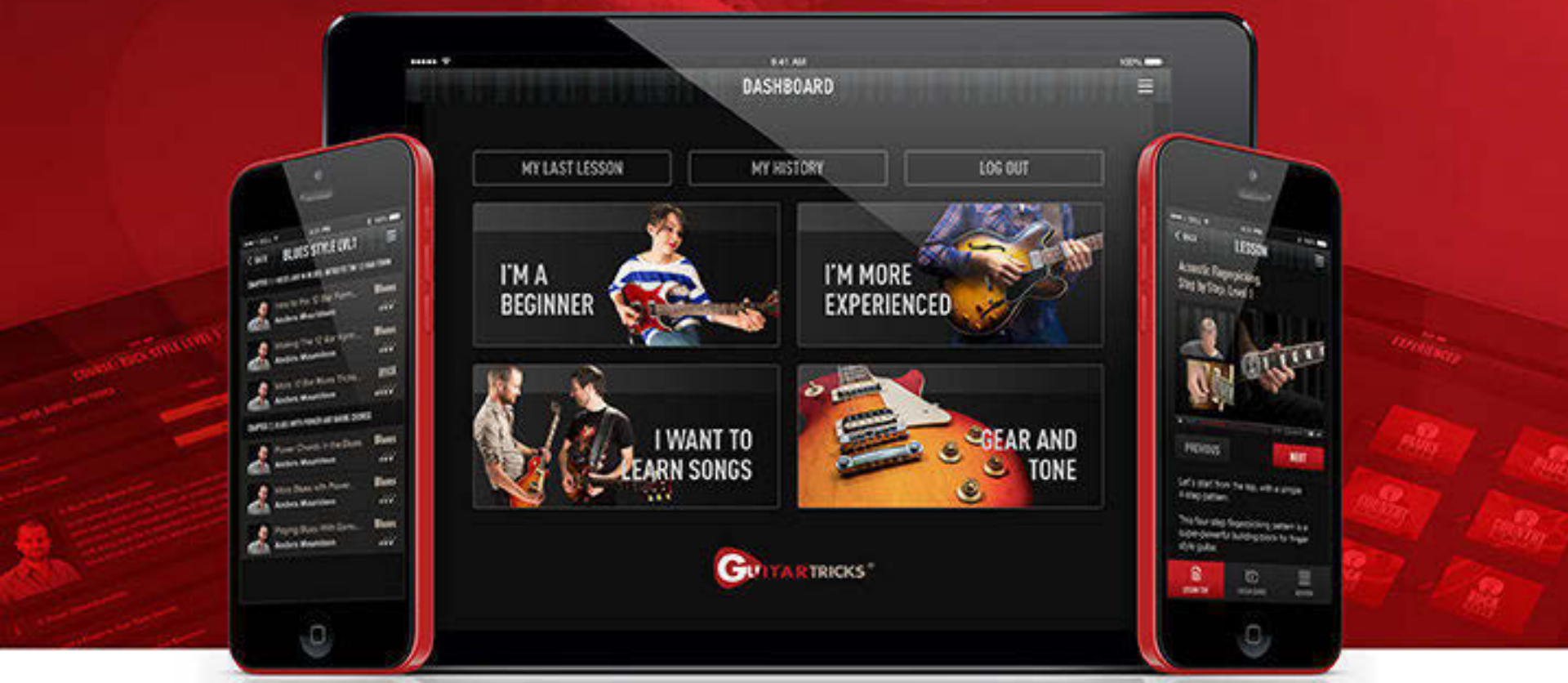

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JOHN FOGERTY

ON SONGWRITING

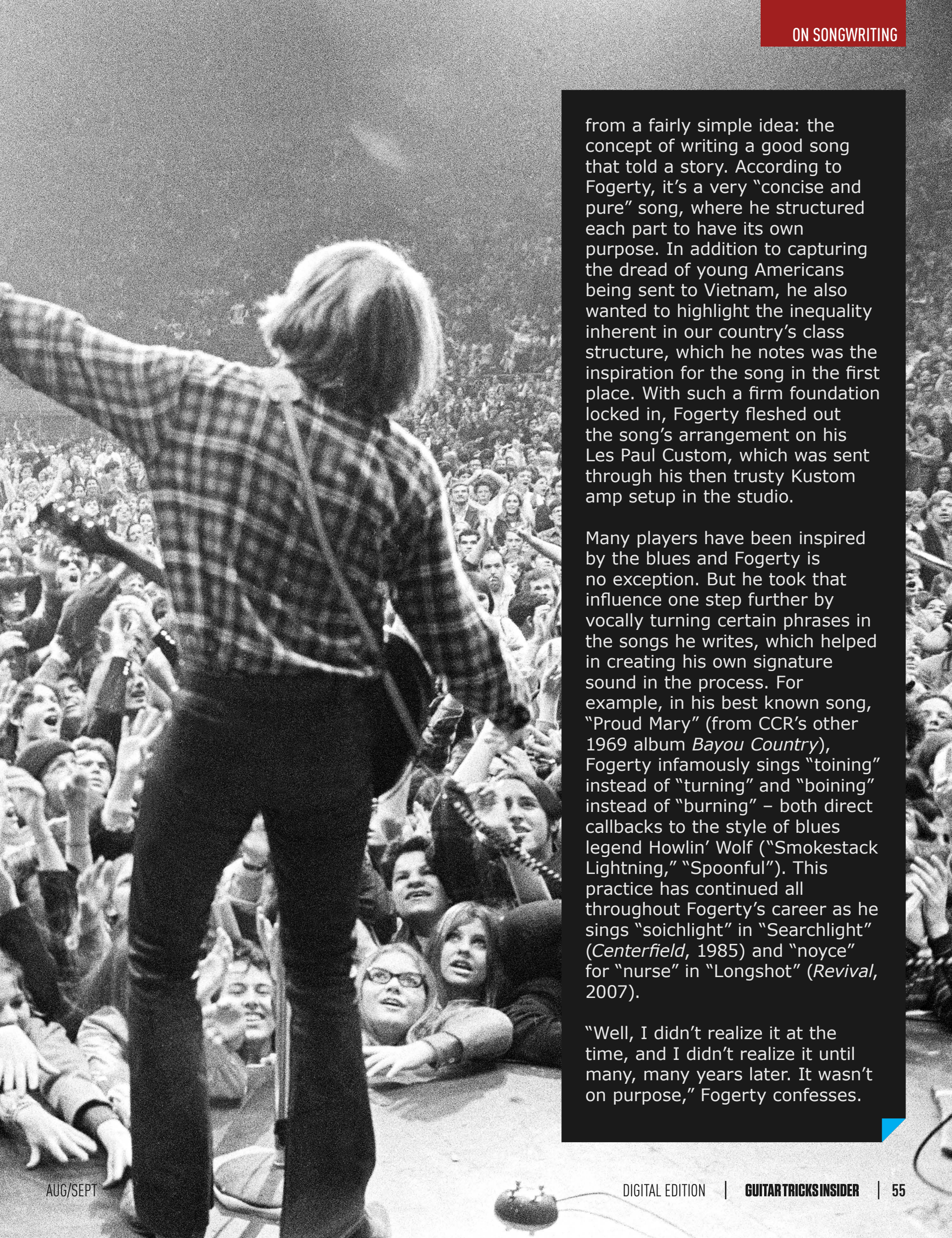
by Mike Mettler

"That's the hardest thing in the world – to keep going and play like you're eight even though you're 35."

No chops, no glory. It's one thing to create killer riffs and pull off flashy guitar solos. But it's quite another to be able to integrate them into great songs that stand the test of time. Case in point: the collected works of John Fogerty, the guitarist, vocalist, and chief songwriter of Creedence Clearwater Revival – arguably the biggest band in America at the end of the 60s and early 70s. Not only could Fogerty jam with the best of them, but he also knew how to pour his guitar prowess into the framework of many a memorable song. And he continues perfecting his craft today as a revered solo artist.

One of the keys to Fogerty's songwriting success is his ability to walk the fine line between being both topical and timeless – a skill he perfected on "Fortunate Son" (from one of CCR's two 1969 albums, *Willy and the Poor Boys*). Fogerty recalls that the impetus for "Fortunate Son" stemmed

John Fogerty by Baron Wolman Iconic Images



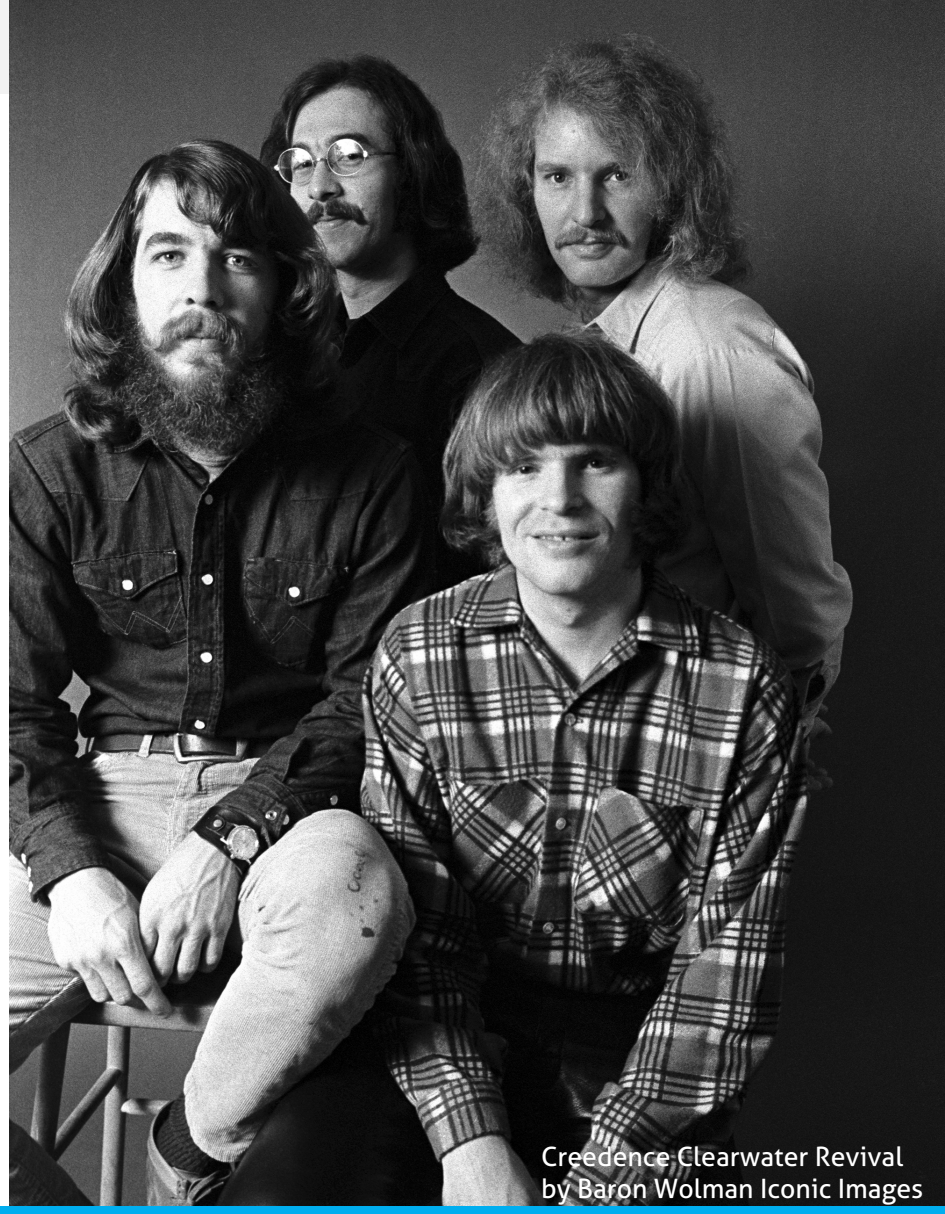
from a fairly simple idea: the concept of writing a good song that told a story. According to Fogerty, it's a very "concise and pure" song, where he structured each part to have its own purpose. In addition to capturing the dread of young Americans being sent to Vietnam, he also wanted to highlight the inequality inherent in our country's class structure, which he notes was the inspiration for the song in the first place. With such a firm foundation locked in, Fogerty fleshed out the song's arrangement on his Les Paul Custom, which was sent through his then trusty Kustom amp setup in the studio.

Many players have been inspired by the blues and Fogerty is no exception. But he took that influence one step further by vocally turning certain phrases in the songs he writes, which helped in creating his own signature sound in the process. For example, in his best known song, "Proud Mary" (from CCR's other 1969 album *Bayou Country*), Fogerty infamously sings "toining" instead of "turning" and "boining" instead of "burning" – both direct callbacks to the style of blues legend Howlin' Wolf ("Smokestack Lightning," "Spoonful"). This practice has continued all throughout Fogerty's career as he sings "soichlight" in "Searchlight" (*Centerfield*, 1985) and "noyce" for "nurse" in "Longshot" (*Revival*, 2007).

"Well, I didn't realize it at the time, and I didn't realize it until many, many years later. It wasn't on purpose," Fogerty confesses.

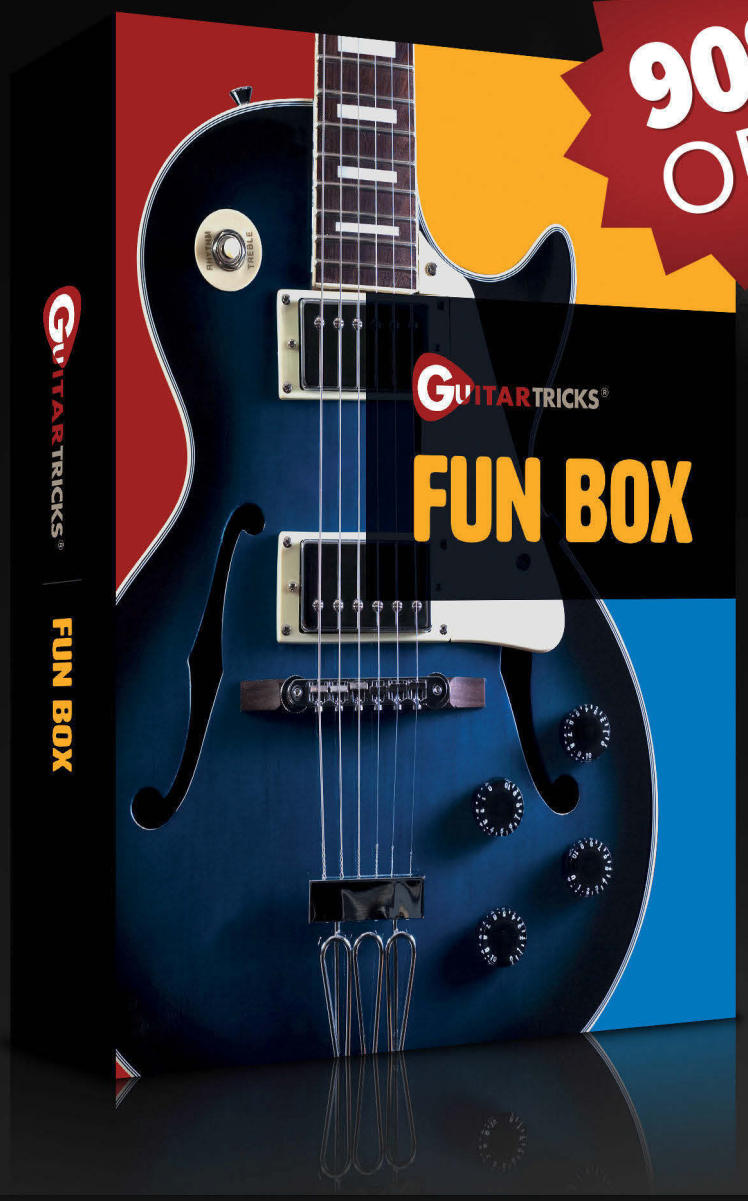
"When I recorded 'Proud Mary,' with the 'toining' and the 'boining,' it just seemed natural to me. It came out of me naturally. I had grown up listening to Howlin' Wolf. So subconsciously I must have absorbed it. It wasn't really until the 90s when I was listening to a lot of music to get myself inspired; and I had on a greatest hits album of his [probably referring to *His Best*, released in 1997 on MCA/Chess] where I took note: 'Oh, listen to that!' [Fogerty imitates Wolf's growl.] The way he pronounced his words – it certainly had the 'boin-ing' in there. I would definitely attribute it to Howlin' Wolf, but I didn't know I was doing that at the time."

Another songwriting hallmark of Fogerty's is how adept he is at transitioning from succinct, short-form pop songs with instantly recognizable riffs ("Up Around the Bend," "Green River," "Born on the Bayou"), to cranking up muscular extended jams (blazing covers of "Suzie Q" and "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," and originals like "Ramble Tamble"



Creedence Clearwater Revival by Baron Wolman Iconic Images

"Creedence Clearwater Revival" by Fortunate Son



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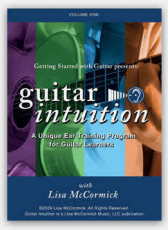
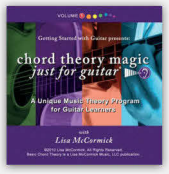




and "Effigy"). "The length of a recorded song was dictated by 78s," Fogerty observes of that early vinyl-cylinder format. "Back in the 40s, you couldn't get much more than three minutes on a record. By the rock & roll era, that had even been chomped down to two-and-a-half minutes or less, because so many of the DJs would do their talking over the intro and the fade out. But I admired the idea that you could be very concise musically."

As much as Fogerty likes to wind out on his guitar, he acknowledges that it can be a little too much sometimes. "I remember going to one show at Winterland; and I don't remember which group it was, but I got there by the time they started their set. They started the first song, and the guitar player began to play a solo. His solo went on for the whole 45-minute set, and then they were done. I kinda went, '*What?!*' That affected me – like, 'Get me outta here!' I thought it was boring." Lesson learned: serve the song first. Then add the sweetening later.

After CCR disbanded in October, 1972, Fogerty tried his hand at a few half-hearted solo efforts; but didn't hit his stride until his fully realized one-man effort, *Centerfield*, 1985. Guitar played a prominent role in the video for the lead single, "The Old Man Down the Road." In a single extended shot, the camera follows the trail and travails of a super long and winding guitar cord before it finally reaches Fogerty in the middle of a road as he jams furiously on a red Stratocaster. "Oh, well, that took a while," Fogerty says with a laugh. "First, I was going to do it as a lark. The band had broken up and I thought, 'I'm just going to go into the studio and record a bunch of songs real fast and play all the instruments myself.' Well, I did that but it really wasn't very good. Some songs were better than others. A lot of them made up the first *Blue Ridge Rangers* album [1973]. My playing wasn't real good, though. It was sort of [pauses]… *quick*, you know?"

Realizing he needed to refine his skill set even further, Fogerty dug in. And as the old saying goes, good things come to those who wait. "To get good enough to actually play every instrument convincingly took me until the middle-80s. Suddenly, at the end of '83 and the beginning of '84, I could see and feel that this guy, who would

… but he had grown up with the idea that a great song was a worthy thing that doesn't just happen "casually."

John Fogerty 2015 by
Larry Marano Atlas Icons

sit down and play bass, and then drums, and then guitar – his one-man band, was getting better. I worked on this every day in my little studio in Albany [in California] – usually first recording a little rhythm guitar track to a click, and then putting drums on that. Once I had the drums – that was the wood frame of the house. And then everything else went on top of that drum track."

Fogerty realized patience and persistence served major roles in furthering both his playing and his songwriting. "When you're not very good and you're starting out on an instrument, you're usually about eight years old. And your frame of reference – your ears – are also about eight years old, and it sounds pretty good to you. You think you're pretty good. Your mother is older and she knows better. But when you decide to do this and you're 35, you can also hear that you're *not* very good! That's the hardest thing in the world – to keep going and play like you're eight even though

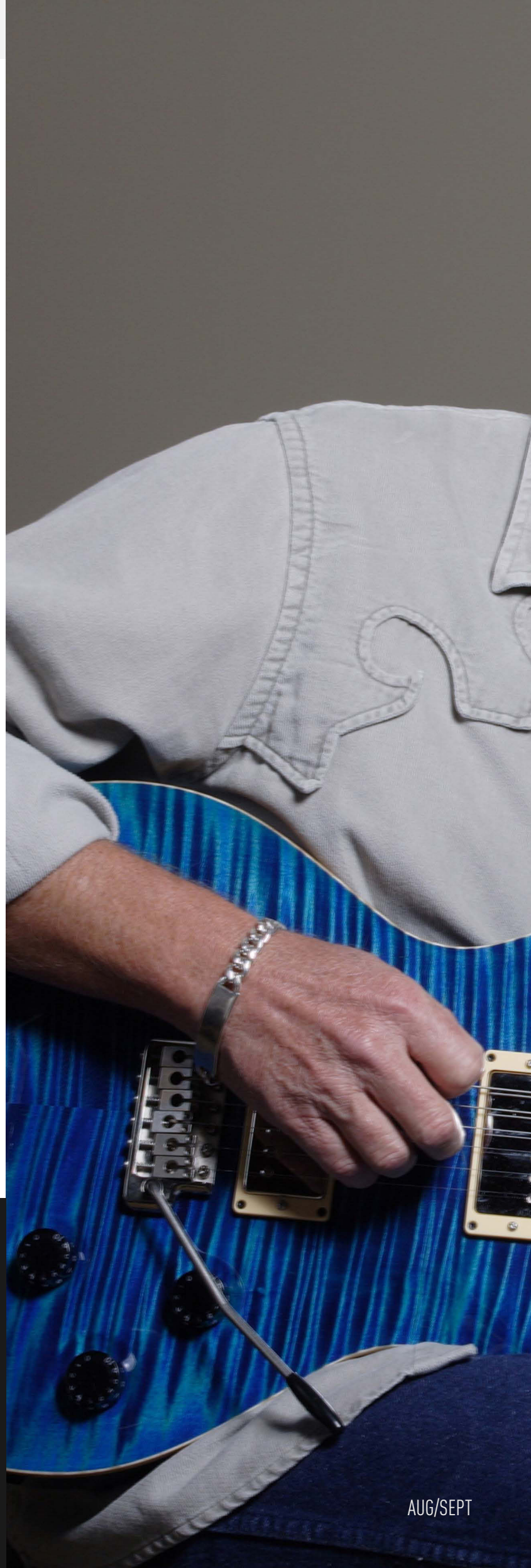
"Old Man Down the Road" by John Fogerty

you're 35; and you hear yourself stumbling all the way through the 10 years it took to create *Centerfield*. Once I finally went into the studio to do *Centerfield*, it was really just a few weeks, actually. But you can imagine once I had finished that record and had some success with it, I never wanted to do it that way again!"

One of the questions Fogerty posed to himself as a young songwriter was, "How do I make this better?" Fogerty attributes that particular mindset to his mother, who would talk to John about songwriters like Irving Berlin and Hoagy Carmichael while he was growing up. Having read several books about different writers and learning how they worked instilled in Fogerty the idea that you don't just go on inspiration alone. You continue to "polish your song" in order to keep improving it.

Fogerty readily agrees with this "flies in the face of the rock & roll ethic," but he had grown up with the idea that a great song was a worthy thing that doesn't just happen "casually." It's something to be proud of. With that in mind, Fogerty continues to follow the tenet of saying whatever he's trying to say with "the *best* words and the *fewest* words." That way, he feels it leaves room to tell more story. Fogerty never subscribed to the idea of being "very wordy" in a song. Rather, he prefers the idea that a really great word could cause listeners to have their imaginations to take over.

Flexibility, determination, and relentless drive are things that have all contributed to making John Fogerty one of the most successful songwriting guitarists of the last 50 years; and the man expects to keep on toining, er …, *turning* that crank for many years to come. ■



Mike Mettler writes the weekly Audiophile column for the Digital Trends website and is also the music editor of Sound & Vision. He interviews artists and producer about their love of music and its creation on his own site, The SoundBard (www.soundbard.com)

...You don't just go on inspiration alone. You continue to "polish your song" in order to keep improving it.

John Fogerty by Neil Zlozower Atlas Icons

A SIDE OF SLOWHAND

8 OF ERIC CLAPTON'S BEST GUEST GIGS

by **Pete Prown**

With a career spanning over half a century, Eric Clapton has hundreds of recordings to his credit including appearances on many artists' records. His greatest guest gig, without question, remains the immortal solos on The Beatles' "While My Guitar Gently Weeps." But let's look beyond that and dive into other Slowhand guest moments, some of which may surprise you.

Eric Clapton Rockwalk by Robert Knight

1

ARETHA FRANKLIN, “GOOD AS I AM TO YOU” (1968)

Here we have a torchy R&B ballad belted by the Queen of Soul while Eric, then still a member of Cream, adds Chicago blues licks around her heavenly vocals. It’s a magical early performance from the guitar hero when he was just 23 years old.

2

JOHN LENNON & THE DIRTY MAC, “YER BLUES” (1968)

This one-off jam from *The Rock and Roll Circus TV* special features members of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Cream, and Jimi Hendrix Experience. Eric can be heard wailing on his famous red Gibson ES-335, while Keith Richards handles Fender P-bass duties. With a lineup of Lennon, Clapton, Richards, and drummer Mitch Mitchell, you could argue the Dirty Mac was the greatest supergroup of all time – even if it was brief.

“Yer Blues” by Dirty Mac

3

STEPHEN STILLS, "GO BACK HOME" (1970)

A fiery guitarist in his own right, Stills was at the peak of fame when he asked Clapton to play on his first solo album. This bluesy vamp was in both guitarists' wheelhouses – Stills jamming on a wah pedal (his tone reminiscent of CSN's "Wooden Ships") and Eric delivering wicked, fuzzy Strat licks at the 3:35 mark.

Eric Clapton by Dave Plastik

4

HOWLIN' WOLF, "LITTLE RED ROOSTER" (1970)

Here's Slowhand with one of the true giants of postwar blues: the great Howlin' Wolf. This recording is particularly cool because it's one of the few times you hear Clapton stretch out on slide guitar. Without question, Eric's an ace bottlenecker.

5

GEORGE HARRISON, "THE ART OF DYING" (1970)

Recorded the same month as the Howlin' Wolf sessions, this showcases some of Eric's most ferocious work starting with a heavy wah riff and spot solos throughout. This Harrison session is also credited for bringing together the core members of Derek & the Dominos, and launching its brief, brilliant career (a few months later they recorded *Layla and Other Love Songs*).

6

FREDDIE KING, “GAMBLING WOMAN BLUES” (1974)

Clapton played with the famed Texas bluesman on and off during the mid-70s, including sessions in Florida that yielded this blistering 22-minute jam. The third player in the room was the terrific slide guitarist George Terry, a member of Eric’s so-called “Tulsa band” of the period.

7

THE WHO, “EYESIGHT TO THE BLIND” (1975)

For the big-budget film *Tommy*, The Who asked Clapton to play the role of the Preacher - a sly wink at his “Clapton is God” persona. With lyrics by bluesman Sonny Boy Williamson and music by Pete Townshend, Eric rips a mighty solo backed by Townshend, bassist John Entwistle and future Who drummer Kenney Jones.

“Eyesight to the Blind” by The Who with Eric Clapton

8

THE BAND, “FURTHER ON UP THE ROAD” (1976)

For The Band’s legendary farewell concert, they brought in Eric to wail on classic Chicago blues and to trade solos with The Band’s Robbie Robertson, another 60s blues-rock pioneer. About 40 seconds into the YouTube video, you can even see the strap falling off Slowhand’s famed Strat “Blackie” and hear him grunt loudly. Hey, happens to the best of us – even the legendary Eric Clapton.

CLICK HERE TO SEE MORE OF ERIC’S FAMOUS SIDEMAN GIGS.

Pete Prown is the leader of Guitar Garden, which has several CDs to its credit, as well as a veteran guitar journalist. He also writes fiction, available at

peteprown.com

“Further On Up the Road” by The Band

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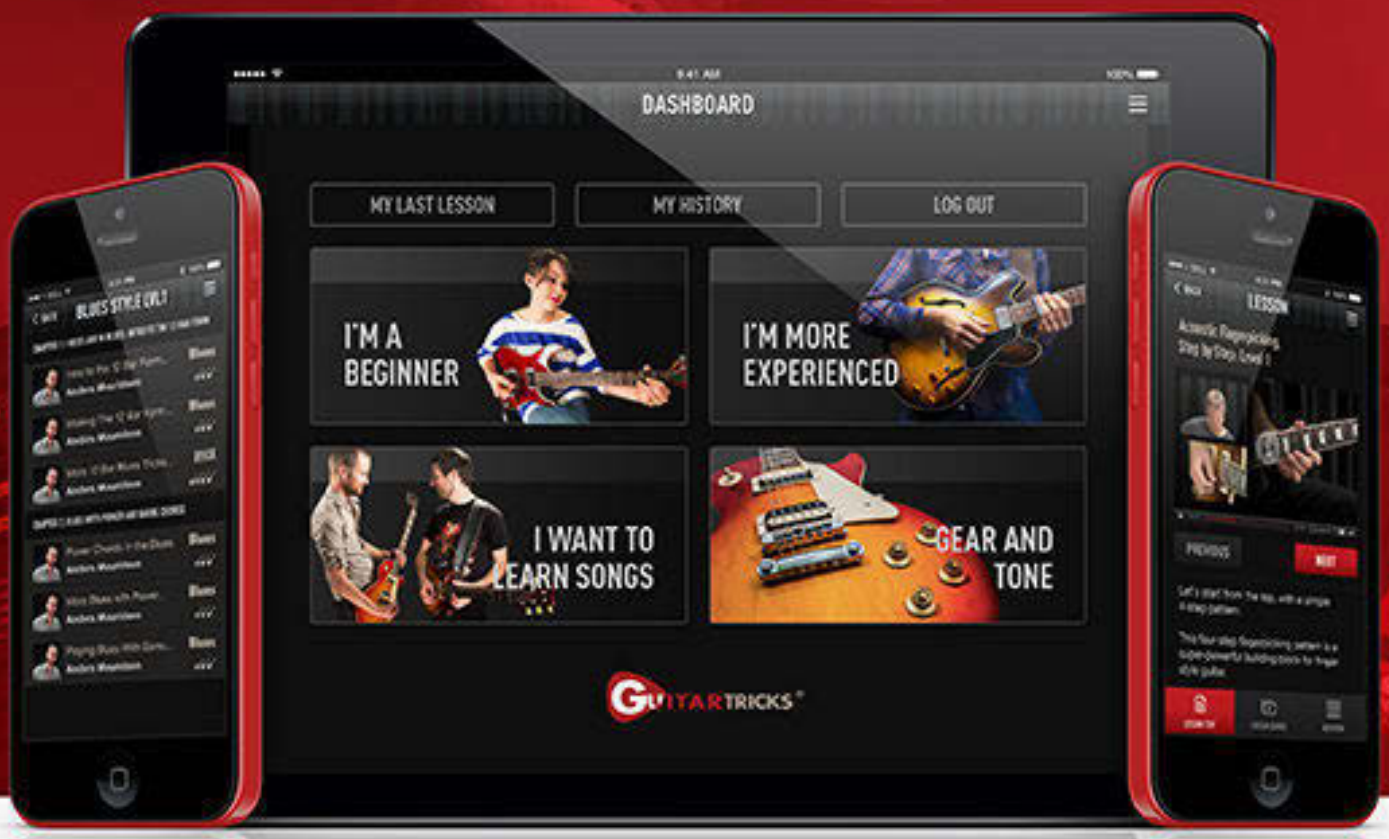

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The Freddie King Style

Widely considered one of the most essential figures in blues history, and influential to guitar greats like Eric Clapton, Freddie King created a legacy with his songwriting and guitar techniques. Some of his signature moves include slides, double stops, and Chuck Berry-esque licks. Anders Mouridsen teaches these techniques along with other key Freddie King hallmarks in this tutorial.

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Mike Olekshy reviews the Avalanche Run pedal from EarthQuaker Devices and a 'breaking out of the box' single-string major scale guitar lesson.

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VO-1 VOCODER EFFECT PEDAL

Review By **Dave Celentano**

One of **BOSS's** most innovative creations, the **VO-1 Vocoder** effects pedal, was recently unveiled at the 2016 winter NAMM show in Anaheim, California. This exceptional and cutting-edge unit harnesses the idiosyncrasies of the human voice, and puts it in the hands of guitarists and bassists giving them vocal expression to "shape" the tone of the instrument as they play. Teaming a guitar and voice (via microphone) to produce out-of-this-world synthesized robot tones, electronic voices, talk box sounds, and even a believable wah-wah, this device raises the bar in vocoder standards by offering more function and flexibility.

The latest in **BOSS** synth technology is built into the **VO-1 Vocoder** giving guitarists access to sounds previously only available to keyboardists, and expanding the range and possibilities of your vocals in remarkable ways. Plus, you don't need be a great singer to take advantage of this pedal. While using the device in conjunction with a microphone, the mouth is employed to shape individual note and chord tones from the guitar signal, so provided your guitar is in tune, the vocals will always sound great regardless of the pitch you sing.

VO-1 VOCODER
EFFECT PEDAL

FEATURES

The **VO-1 Vocoder** is easy to operate and has four modes employing the guitar signal to generate synthesized vocals – each with unique characteristics. Classic rock-minded players will dig the Talk Box mode, which authenticates in a very real way the original effect used in several 70s and 80s standards, like Peter Frampton's "Do You Feel Like We Do," Joe Walsh's "Rocky Mountain Way," Aerosmith's "Sweet Emotion," and Bon Jovi's "Livin' On A Prayer" minus the cumbersome talk box rig and slobbery tube your mouth wraps around. The Vintage mode replicates a prototypical analog synth voice sound, and Advanced produces modern robotic vocalization heard in contemporary pop, electronic, and R&B music that's more intense, clear, and articulate than the Vintage selection. Elegant vocal-like characteristics are created using the Choir mode, which sounds especially good on a clean amp tone. With the exception of Choir, all modes require a microphone to activate the vocoder function. **VO-1** applies the effect only when singing/talking into the mic and turns it off once you've backed away from the mic – subsequently soloing the unaffected guitar signal and giving the performer ultimate artistic freedom without having to constantly step on the stomp box to engage and disengage. Additionally, the **VO-1** can replicate vocal harmonies using the notes of guitar chords while singing/talking, so solo artists can now bring electronically generated backup singers in a stomp pedal to any gig. Pretty amazing!

Level and Blend knobs control the volume and mix between the effected and dry signal, while Tone and Color adjust EQ and sound alterations unique to each effect mode. The **VO-1** has five connector jacks: 1/4" Input and Output for instrument to amp, 1/4" Send and Return for adding external effects into the loop without affecting the mic signal, and a three pin XLR Mic input for a microphone. The unit is powered by a single 9-volt battery or AC adaptor (sold separately), and comes with a five-year warranty.

The tracking is magnificent and captured everything provided I didn't play too harmonically complex. When using the mic, the pedal seems to respond best to less complicated chords and melodies. Power chords, triads, and 7th chords sound great, but altered extensions like "A7#5/b9" tended to be messy. Remember, this pedal works in tandem with your voice. Therefore, playing rhythms and melodies you can vocalize with will yield the best results. And while using the effect with a mic, you might want to stay away from shredding unless you can sing 16th notes at 160 beats per minute! Once you back away from the mic, the Vocoder function is no longer activated, which exposes the unaffected guitar signal, at which time you can let it rip with funky rhythms and blazing solos. ■

VERDICT

Plugging into the exciting **VO-1 Vocoder** is guaranteed to let your musical voice run free and take your playing to uncharted territories offering a whole new palette of sounds, tones, and textures for the guitar world to dig into. Considering that the **VO-1** combines a talk box, vocoder, and choir all in one small pedal makes this hard to refuse.

MESA BOOGIE MARK FIVE: 35 (HEAD AND CABINET)

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE
$1,599 (HEAD) AND $649 (2X12 SPEAKER CABINET)

In the early 70s, **Mesa Boogie** founder and owner **Randall Smith** was busy repairing amps for local musicians in Northern California, while simultaneously developing a new and unique "cascading" tube preamp circuit that would change guitar players' tone, the way they play, and provide high-gain with almost limitless sustain. One of the first to test drive Smith's new sonic creation was fellow Bay Area guitarist Carlos Santana, who was immediately enamored. Since then, **Mesa Boogie** has impressed thousands of guitarists worldwide from all styles of music. Plus, there's a certain element of class and prestige in having a **Boogie** amp in your backline. High profile players and devoted users from diverse genres such as jazz, rock, metal, and country include **Al Di Meola**, **Lee Ritenour**, **Andy Timmons**, **Bruce Springsteen**, **Andy Summers**, **John Petrucci**, **Dave Grohl**, **James Hetfield**, **Kirk Hammett**, and **Blake Shelton** showing how versatile the **Mesa Boogie** line truly is.

Currently the **Mark Five: 35** amp is the newest in the celebrated Mark series and spotlights a best-of-the-best in classic **Mesa Boogie** amp tones and flexibility. Based on overwhelming customer feedback, the **Mark Five: 35** is available in three different formats – head, 1X12 combo, and rack-mount. And this is the real deal. No digital amp modeling here – just old-school tube technology with meticulous attention to getting "the sound" right, and hand-built right here in the U.S. For this review, Mesa sent the head version along with a fully enclosed 2X12 Recto Compact speaker cabinet loaded with Celestion Vintage 30 speakers, which packs a gut-punching tone.

FEATURES

Mark Five: 35's multi-watt capability uses their own Dyna-watt technology consisting of three progressing power stages: 10, 25, and 35 watts bringing versatility to any gig. The 10- and 25-watt modes are perfect for home use and low volume gigs, while the surprisingly loud 35-watt selection provides adequate stage volume for bigger shows. In lower watt modes the amp produces a spongier but still tight tone with increased clipping, while the full 35 watts delivers considerably more headroom. The "CabClone" D.I. feature on the back is perfect for recording or feeding straight to a PA, and includes closed-back, open-back, and vintage speaker emulation options, plus a speaker on/off switch giving you the choice to record silently or simultaneously with the speaker engaged.

Mark Five: 35 gets it's mojo from four Mesa EL84 power amp tubes, which add power, punch, and fatness. When pushed, they can produce everything from luscious clean tones to glorious levels of overdriven sustain and saturation. Heavenly bliss for head-bangers and shredders! But it's not all about high gain. This amp can deliver sweet, bluesy characteristics similar to **Gary Moore's** tone and cleaner varieties akin to **Stevie Ray Vaughan**, as well.

At first glance the amp appears intimidating with all the knobs and switches. But thanks to the 12 time-saving Factory Sample Settings in the owner's manual, newbies to the **Boogie** line will be delighted by how quickly it is to dial up killer tones. The amp features two channels and three different mode voicings for each: Channel 1 – Clean, Fat, or Crunch, while Channel 2 includes three of **Mesa's** most celebrated overdriven tones – **Mark IIC+**,

Mark IV, or **Extreme**. Each channel has independent Treble, Mid, Bass, Gain, Presence, Master Volume, and Solo boost controls allowing complete freedom for tone shaping. The Mid control on Channel 1 has a curious feature – before the 12 o'clock position it functions as a normal mid, but past straight up it behaves as a variable gain boost. Pretty cool! The rugged knobs and switches are set in the face of the amp providing protection from accidently being turned or broken off (an improvement from the knobs on my **Mark IV** combo, which stick out a little bit above the amp face profile and subsequently had two switches damaged while in transport). If additional tonal tweaking is needed, the 5-band graphic EQ can be engaged via an included footswitch or manually from the amp. The footswitch is the key to unlocking the amp's versatility in a live performance situation, which allows toggling between the two channels, EQ on/off, and independent Solo boost for each channel with the latter coming in handy when you need a volume boost for a solo and doubles as a mute if turned to zero. Extra goodies include a long-tank spring reverb with separate control knobs (located on the back) for each channel, as well as FX loop, headphone input jack for private jamming, and two 4 ohm and one 8 ohm speaker outputs.

Considering all these features, the **Mark Five: 35** is an incredibly lightweight amp head at 27 pounds, and looks sharp sitting on the Mesa speaker cabinet. Additional features include a five-year transferable warranty and slipcover to protect it when not in use. ■

VERDICT

Mesa Boogie's pursuit for excellence continues to gain legions of happy customers around the globe. From super clean to extreme high gain and everything between, the **Mark Five: 35** dishes out the goods. All the appetizing tonal variations and options are like choosing a flavor of ice cream at the parlor – they're all delicious, which makes it hard to decide. Two thumbs up on this amp. I'd give it three if I had another!

Godin

Passion Custom
Swamp Ash Electric Guitar

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$549**

Godin Guitars is on the fast track to becoming an undeniable leader in guitar innovation and craftsmanship. It's easy to see why with electric guitars like the "Passion Custom Swamp Ash" from their distinguished Passion series. Designed and built in Canada at Godin's Premier Atelier factory, the Passion Custom features several nifty upgrades putting it miles ahead of most standard electric guitars. As the name implies, this guitar is customized with essential features serious players are looking for while delivering a multitude of sonic options. Guitarists hunting for a versatile weapon that can authenticate surf, blues, rock, jazz, and country styles will do some serious head-cutting with this axe.

FEATURES

Under the hood, Passion Custom is powered by a Seymour Duncan "P-Rail" in the neck position which gives options of a P-90, humbucker, and single-coil all in one pickup, and is perfect for jazzier playing styles and classic blues. The fiery Godin "Custom Cajun" single coil in the bridge position packs a ton of power and bite that will cut through any mix. There are five-way selector switch toggles through five pickup configurations beginning in neck position and moving towards the bridge: humbucker, P-90, two single coils in series, two single coils parallel, and single coil. Mounted between the tone and volume knobs is a super cool H.D.R. (High Definition Revoicer) button that bumps the mids and brings out more harmonic nuances, which gives the player a choice between active and passive, and ultimately two different sounds for each pickup for a total of 10 unique sounds. A single 9-volt battery drives the H.D.R. and is accessible through the back of the guitar.

The Red Cedar body has five synchronized resonance chambers giving it a lightweight feel without compromising tone and topped off with a cherry-looking, thick Swamp Ash top. One small detail (and nice touch) I didn't expect to see on the back of the guitar was classy real wood plates covering the whammy bar and electronics cavities rather than the usual plastic. Whether rocking out on the stage or sitting at home practicing, the contoured body is remarkably comfortable, lightweight, and balanced. The bolt-on Hard Rock Maple neck has a smooth, satin finish that's very different from the glossy finishes on other guitar necks, which tend to feel sticky, and rounded off with well-dressed frets on a maple fingerboard.

Play crazy dive bomb explosions a la Hendrix and Van Halen, or gently vibrato chords and melodies from your favorite surf songs with Godin's Tru-Loc Tremolo. This unique system lets the player lock the whammy bar in a desired comfort position (an upgrade from standard screw in whammy bars) with an Allen wrench (included) that's accessed through the tremolo cover plate on the back of the guitar. Godin's 18-to-1 gear ratio custom locking machine heads provide stable and accurate tuning, as well as a pair of roller design string trees on the headstock to keep the whammy bar system in tune when in use.

Electric guitars have long had issues with the 1/4" output jack hexagon screw inconveniently coming loose or detaching. Over the 70-plus years of building electric guitars, one would think this issue would've been solved by now. Well, look no further. I was pleased to see Godin fixed this problem by installing a unique jack output that won't fall apart! The Passion Custom has a 25 1/2" scale for a tight string response and comes strung with Godin E-10 Nickel regular light gauge strings (.010-.046) as well as a sporty padded gig bag with lots of pockets to store strings, cords, music, and other necessary accessories. ■

VERDICT

Make no bones about it. The **Passion Custom Swamp Ash** is unmatched when it comes to versatility and function. It feels solid, well built, sounds smokin' hot, and makes for a perfect go-to axe for multi-genre players and studio cats that want tonal flexibility and a classy look on one guitar. Take heart in knowing that you're purchasing a supreme instrument that looks great, delivers great tone, and will last a lifetime.

PRS PAUL REED SMITH GUITARS T.M.

ANGELUS SE A30E
ACOUSTIC/ELECTRIC GUITAR

Review By **Dave Celentano**

STREET PRICE **$1099**

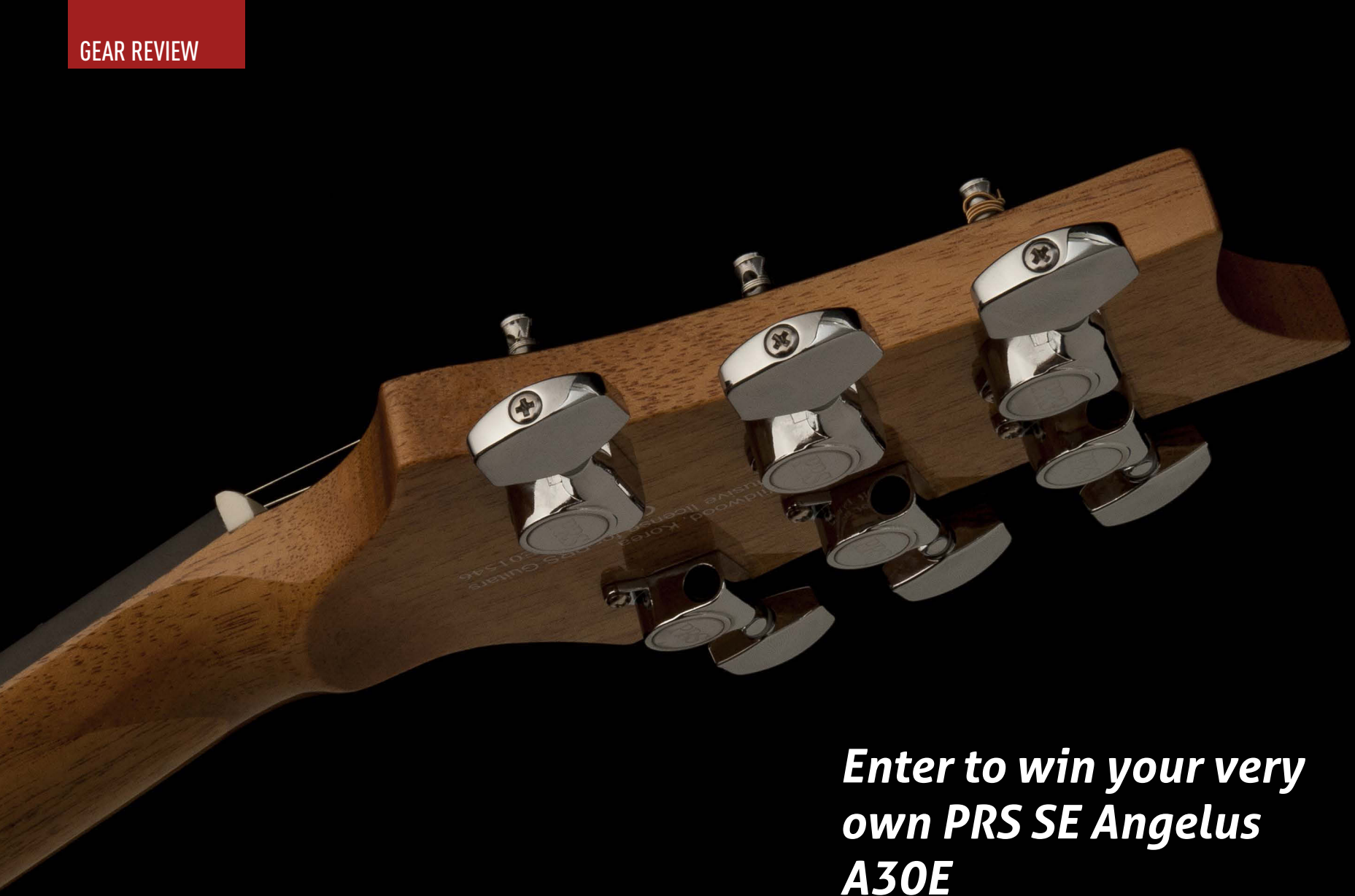
From a modest beginning in 1985, **PRS Guitars** has snowballed into a major force in the electric guitar world, and expanded to the acoustic arena with equal success. Initially, only pros and deep-pocketed clients could afford their expensive, high-end guitars; so the more affordable **SE** series, which are made in Korea, was developed to satisfy the rest of the market. Artists as diverse as Christian hard rockers "**Skillet**", blues and rock singer/songwriter **John Hiatt**, **Alter Bridge**, **Creed** guitarist **Mark Tremonti**, and **Carlos Santana** are just a few of the high-profile musicians endorsing **PRS** guitars and equipment.

This review spotlights the **Angelus SE A30E** acoustic-electric guitar and joins the family of **PRS Guitars'** economical **SE** line with superior woods, construction, components, and versatility, while continuing the tradition of building top-of-the-line guitars for players of all levels and styles. Plus, the onboard electronics let you take this guitar out to gigs and generate a great sound onstage or inthe studio.

FEATURES

The **SE A30E** includes a number of **PRS** approved accoutrements including a cutaway body with rosewood back and sides, solid spruce top, mahogany neck, ebony fingerboard and bridge, bone nut and saddle for maximum sustain, and well-manicured black binding framing the front and back of the body. The fully-enclosed, three-on-a-side chrome **PRS SE** tuners and metallic silver **SE Angelus** name on the trademark headstock add a touch of class and will sparkle under the stage lights. Of course, no **PRS** guitar is complete without the signature bird inlays on the fingerboard.

Once found exclusively on high-end **PRS** U.S.A. private stock acoustics, the **SE A30E** features their hybrid X and fan bracing design on the top, which allows the low end to resonate more freely and not be squashed when the guitar is held up to your body. The rosewood back and sides produce a rich tone, resonate highs, and



Enter to win your very own PRS SE Angelus A30E

tight bass articulation that's instantly apparent and candy to your ears.

On initial glance, the **SE A30E** has a clean look and appears exclusively acoustic, but the clever PRS architects hid the electronics inside the body, thus eliminating a tone-compromising hole cut in the side of the guitar to mount a control panel, preamp, and battery compartment. Volume and tone knobs are tucked away just inside the sound hole, and are easy to adjust with one finger. Also in the sound hole is the battery, which is fixed to the heel and simple to access when you change strings. The pickup is a **PRS**-designed under-the-saddle transducer with a 1/4" output jack doubling as the strap button on the butt of the guitar.

A playing test using picks of different thicknesses immediately reveals a myriad of tonal variation. Harder picks draw warmer and darker tones, medium a bit less warm, and the softer is delicate and lean. Heavier picking and strumming brings out the guitar's full-bodied voice, which is great for live performances when you need it to project. But regardless of picking device, the guitar maintains note clarity across the board. Alternate and drop tunings sound magnificent, as well, as softer finger-style playing, the latter benefiting immensely when the guitar is plugged into an amp or P.A.

The 25.35" scale length, which is a little shorter than most acoustics, contributes to a slightly looser playing feel (and more comfortable in my opinion). The guitar held its tuning thanks to smooth turning **PRS** machine heads, and the compensated saddle resolves intonation issues, which provides sweet-sounding chords across the entire fingerboard. The **SE A30E** comes with a **PRS** hard-shell case and a limited lifetime warranty. ■

VERDICT

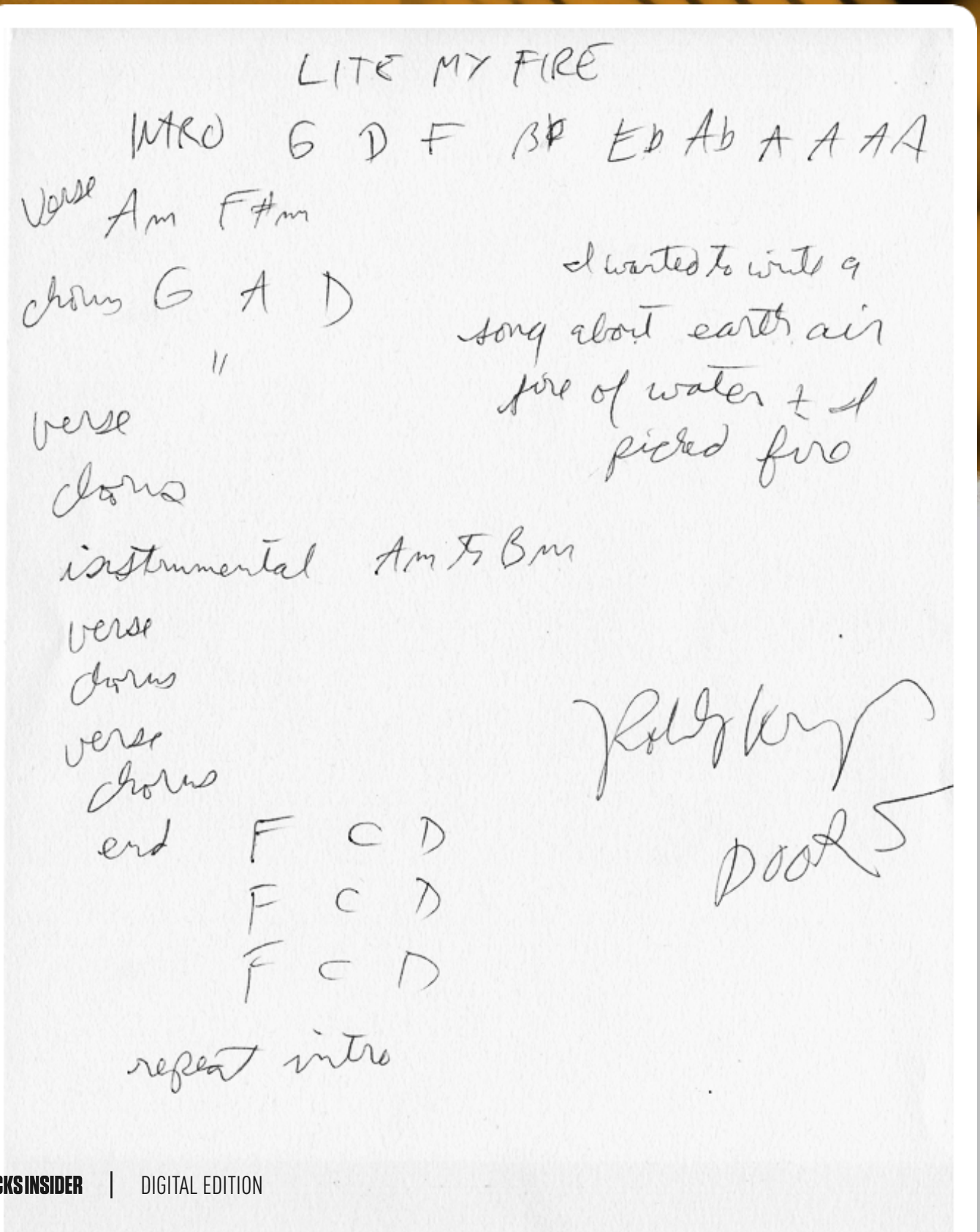
Taking into account the components and craftsmanship, this guitar is a great value for the buck. Whether finger picking, strumming, playing live, in the studio, or at home, the flexible **SE A30E** can handle it all and is worth considering. It's perfect for pros looking for a professional, stage-ready steel string acoustic that counters as a superior practice instrument, and provides plenty of grow room for students.

Dave Celentano teaches private guitar lessons in the Los Angeles area, authored a multitude of educational guitar books, dvds, and internet tutorials, and released several cds. His latest books "Michael Bloomfield Legendary Licks" and "Triads for the Rock Guitarist" are available everywhere and his latest cd "Desert Storm" is available on iTunes, Amazon.com, and CDBaby.com. For more info check out Dave's web site:

www.davecelentano.com

THE DOORS
LIGHT MY FIRE

When we think of the actual music of the The Doors, Jim Morrison usually comes to mind. But we are wrong. Yes, he was the vocalist and lyricist. But the music of the Doors came from Robbie Krieger (guitar), Ray Manzarek (keyboards) and John Densmore (drums). The sound of the Doors was the sound of the band. And their most indelible song was written by Robbie Krieger. In fact, it was the first song he ever wrote and the foundation for the two-chord modal vamp that came from jazz legend John Coltrane. ■



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We look forward
to sharing more with *YOU*.

TELL US WHAT *YOU* THINK!

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